

Better Art

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Landscapes

Get
Creative
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116

Pages of expert
tips & techniques

How to:

- Correct and repair mistakes easily
- Sharpen your existing skills
- Improve your brushstrokes

Packed with

Simple solutions to landscape problems!

Your watercolour and
drawing handbook for:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| ✓ Skies & clouds | ✓ Buildings |
| ✓ Water | ✓ Woodland scenes |
| ✓ Mountains & hills | ✓ Country scenes |
| ✓ Bridges | ✓ City scenes |



Combine techniques to create realistic artwork



Everything you need to start painting with impact!

Paint either side of twigs

Brush in 'on your toes' position for twigs

Push paint upwards and outwards for foliage mass

Pull short strokes downwards for leafy masses



Sweep stroke across to suggest grass

Apply masking fluid and allow to dry

Short up-and-down strokes to suggest grass in shadow against cottage wall

Add clean water and blend down into foreground

Remove masking fluid gently with finger

Paint loosely over dry masking fluid

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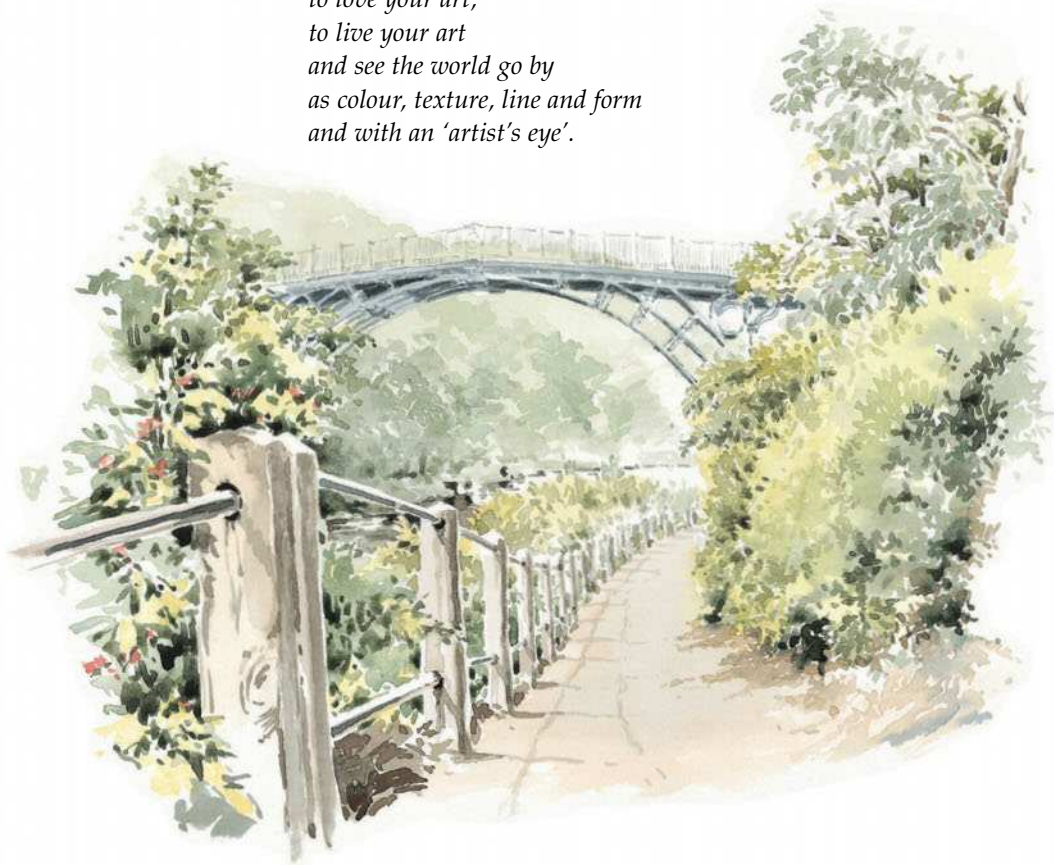


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Introduction

*With this book I will be helping you...
to love your art,
to live your art
and see the world go by
as colour, texture, line and form
and with an 'artist's eye'.*



To love and live your art may be regarded as a total commitment or an invisible thread woven into the fabric of your day-to-day life – or anywhere between the two. It is primarily an awareness of the part you wish your art to play, and where you choose to let it blossom and flourish.

Colour, texture, line and form can work together or individually, depending upon the way you incorporate them into your artwork, but the 'artist's eye' needs to be nurtured and developed as an integral part of the whole. In this book I endeavour to reaffirm what artists throughout the ages have experienced, and to introduce some of the excitement I feel for my subjects.

Colour

When considering colour, whether in its fullest sense or as a limited palette, it is also important to refer to tone. On page 38 you can see how a painting can be built with just two colours with the emphasis on their tones.

Page 41 introduces a limited palette, which is useful for expressing mood and atmosphere.

Texture

Observing and appreciating the variety and interest of surface textures is of great importance when creating convincing interpretations of landscapes – tree bark, stone walls, foliage and water effects, for example, would lose their impact if they were all treated in the same way. Textures can be achieved by using techniques such as blotting off (page 21), drybrush (page 23) and wax resist (page 24); and very often it is the support that is most important when creating textures.

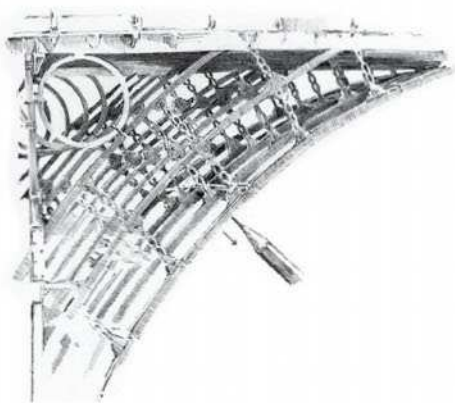
Line

Line drawing is very useful for sketchbook work – using a 'wandering line' to capture impressions of moving objects; and combining line with tone in pencil sketches, ink and wash studies or in watercolour pencil with wash

pictures. This offers the options of drawing first and applying a tonal overlay (page 93), painting in washes first and bringing the picture together with a drawing (page 106), or working the two together (page 107).

Form

Contour lines help find form in order to create a three-dimensional impression on a two-dimensional surface. These lines may be the important underdrawing, lightly applied as a guide and then absorbed within the tonal images of the final interpretation. They can also be attractive in their own right as part of an interesting and personal style.



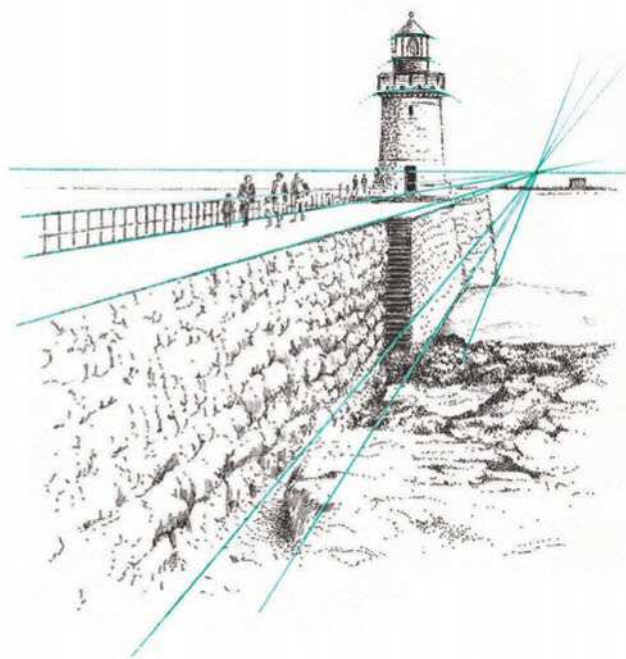
The themes

Each theme commences with basic pencil marks that relate to the following pages, and concludes with a demonstration in one or more of a variety of media, giving you an opportunity to study the medium or media in more depth. Within the themes the various media are used in a number of ways and with different styles, techniques and subject matter, so that you can become more aware of some of the vast array of choices at your disposal.

Play and exercise pages

As children we learn from play, and there is no reason not to continue to enjoy playing as part of the learning process with art; so part of the introduction to each theme consists of a few relevant exercises with brush or pencil, which can be regarded as enjoyable warming up prior to the more serious work that follows.

I use the word 'serious' because I regard discipline as an important factor, especially in the early stages when learning the basics. This will ensure that a firm foundation for artwork is established – but there should also be an element of fun and a desire to take advantage of 'happy accidents', as well as flexibility of approach



and application. Look for unexpected opportunities that may lead to new discoveries of techniques and ideas, and you will never tire of the endless possibilities they present, allied with your powers of observation.

Discipline leads to freedom

Establish the basic disciplines of drawing, observation and methods of application, and you will enjoy the freedom to create your own style – detailed and controlled, or loose and free – in the sure knowledge that you fully understand what you are trying to achieve, and are developing the confidence that will enable you to achieve it.



Materials

Pencils

Graphite pencils

The ones suitable for drawing are soft and range from a grade B through to the much softer 9B.

Watersoluble pencils

These are ideal as a sketching medium as well as for detailed drawings; they also combine well with watercolour paint in mixed-media works.

Charcoal pencils

These are made from particles of natural charcoal mixed with finest clays, encased in round cedarwood barrels. The grades – light, medium and dark – offer a useful range of tones, but because the charcoal is

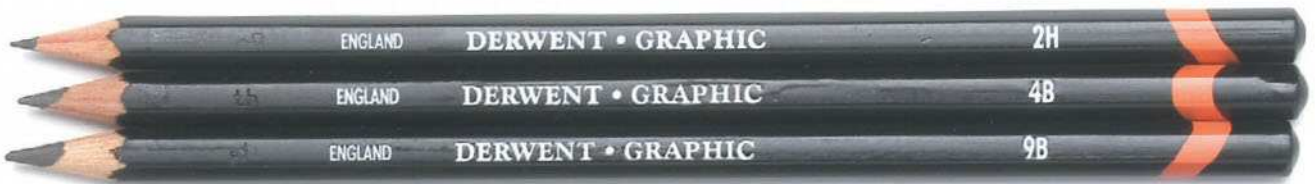
powdery, the pencils have to be handled carefully and finished drawings need to be fixed to prevent smudging.

Graphite sticks

Similar in appearance to pencils, these are made from solid graphite, sometimes protected by paper or thin plastic, which can be peeled away as the sticks are used. Chunky graphite blocks are uncased, which means that both the tips and sides can be used.

Compressed charcoal

Smooth natural charcoal, made in the shape of a convenient rounded chunky stick, can be used as an alter-



Graphite pencils



Watersoluble pencils

Charcoal pencil



native to more delicate and unevenly shaped natural charcoal sticks.

Pastel pencils

Effective used on their own, particularly upon a tinted or coloured surface, these also work well used alongside soft pastel sticks: the sticks can cover large areas, with the sharpened pencils providing fine detail.

Artists' and studio coloured pencils

The artists' variety are of larger diameter than studio pencils, and the colour strip is slightly waxy, making them useful for blending and superimposing colours. The studio ranges are ideal for fine, detailed work, as they are slimmer, and their hexagonal barrels are helpful when executing delicate work. They are formulated not to crumble during use, which makes them reliable.

Watercolour pencils

When used dry on dry paper, these produce a soft

effect; when water is lightly washed over the marks, the images swiftly become a painting. Further drawing can be overlaid when the pigment has thoroughly dried, and this combination of drawing and painting is an appealing one.

Woodless watercolour sticks

Used in a similar way to watercolour pencils, these have the added advantage of having no casing, which means that they can be broken into suitable lengths and be used lengthways to create broad strokes of colour.

Profipens

These are available in a number of nib sizes, to produce everything from very fine to quite broad lines. Depending on the tooth of the paper on which they are used, they can create solid or broken, textured lines. They can be used on their own or in combination with another medium, very often watercolour paint.



Watercolour

Paints

Watercolour paints are available in tubes and pans – and you can use watercolour pencils in the same way by mixing water with shavings of pigment (see page 98).

Rather than buying a pre-made set of paints, it is a good idea to purchase a box or tin to hold pans or tubes, and to choose individual colours to create your own range of hues. Working in monochrome or with a limited palette is advantageous when starting out, so it is not necessary to fill the box or tin all at once, which means that you can purchase artists' quality paints when you can afford them. Pocket-size watercolour

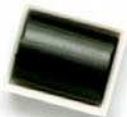
boxes, which sometimes contain an integral brush and water pot, are useful for working on-site.

Brushes

As with paints, it is preferable to have one or two good-quality sable brushes rather than an array of indifferent specimens. I often complete an entire painting using only one brush, as long as it possesses the necessary attributes for my personal style: good water-holding capacity, flexibility (hairs that spring back into place after the application has been made), and a fine point.

A versatile starting set of brushes would be Nos 3, 6 and 8 round; I occasionally use a flat brush as well, for drybrush overlays (see page 23) and wash overlays (see page 83).

Tubes and pans of Artists' watercolour paints



Designers' gouache

No 3 round brush



No 6 round brush



No 8 round brush



Flat brush



Other Equipment

Water pots

To preserve the shapes of your brushes, use a water pot that allows them to be supported, with the tips facing downwards, around the edge of the pot. The drip tray, which doubles as a lid when not in use, catches the drips, and the brushes retain their points.

Palettes

I always use ceramic palettes, as they are easy to clean and do not stain; this allows each new colour or mix to remain clear and not be influenced by what has been in the palette well beforehand.

Sharpeners

My preference is to use a Stanley knife rather than a craft knife or pencil sharpener; the metal version is better than a plastic one, as the extra weight helps with the execution of movements that take off slivers of wood and graze the lead to produce fine pencil points.

Erasers

A putty eraser can be kneaded into various shapes, which makes it useful for lifting soft pastel and

charcoal marks. For erasing pencil marks or cleaning drawing paper surfaces, a variety of other erasers, including plastic ones, is available from art or office suppliers.

I prefer to use erasers as little as possible, and draw very lightly at first, adding intensity of tone by applying more pressure, only correcting as the images develop. I feel that many of the most interesting drawings result from seeing how the artist developed the work, by observing the underlayers.

WORKING ON-SITE

Try to be as comfortable as possible, and have all your materials to hand. A lightweight 'sketching' easel, on which a plastic water jar may be hung, is a help if you find working on a watercolour block (or pad) on your lap too awkward. A lightweight folding seat with a back rest may be preferable to a stool and a field or pocket box of paints (brush included) with tissues or kitchen roll will complete a watercolour kit.

When painting out of doors the weather conditions may influence your work to such an extent that you will need to consider how you intend to deal with them. Warm clothes are needed if it is chilly, and a sun hat should be used for protection should the opposite apply.

Because you will need to consider changes in cast shadows as the hours pass, photographic reference (using a digital or instant camera) or sketchbook drawings depicting the position of shadows where they enhance the composition, are of great help.



Brush pot



Ceramic palette



Putty eraser



Paper

Drawing paper

Standard office copier paper is ideal for sketching and preliminary layouts; you can also practise drawing techniques on this inexpensive support – but remember to use the thin sheets in the form of a pad, as it is otherwise easy to pick up texture inadvertently from the board or table on which the paper is placed.

For more permanent drawings there is a wide range of quality cartridge paper of differing weights available, and it is a good idea to experiment with various combinations of paper and drawing media to find out which best suits your individual style and requirements.

Watercolour paper

HP (Hot-Pressed) watercolour paper is suitable for drawings, and allows you to happily combine pencil drawing with watercolour painting, without the cockling effect that sometimes occurs with lighter-weight cartridge papers.

With its forgiving painting surface, Bockingford is an economical watercolour paper that is ideal for practise exercises as well as completed paintings. Also available in a variety of tinted surfaces – blue, eggshell, cream and oatmeal – and in an extra-rough version, the Bockingford range may be all you need to get started.

I have used Saunders Waterford NOT (Cold-Pressed) watercolour paper for a number of the illustrations in this book, and it is one of my favourite surfaces on which to work. Where a rough surface is required, Saunders Waterford Rough is ideal.

Other papers and sketchbooks

The papers described above can be used with a variety of media, including watercolour, pen and ink, pencil, gouache, acrylic, charcoal and pastels. When using the latter, a heavyweight Rough paper with a watercolour wash underpainting makes a very good surface. Pastels also respond well to the Somerset Velvet range (see page 14), and can be used on pastel board and sandpaper.

On page 95 you can see how a tinted surface (also available in the Somerset Velvet range) offers an ideal support for the drier methods of paint application, such as gouache and acrylic.

A variety of papers are offered for sale in sketchbooks, and I find that the spiral-bound versions are particularly useful for working on location. The sizes and formats vary, so shop around to see what suits you best.

STRETCHING PAPER

When working on lightweight watercolour papers, it is advisable to stretch the sheet on a board to avoid cockling when areas of wash are applied. Make sure that the paper size is less than that of the board, allowing sufficient margin for the gummied strip to adhere evenly around the edges.



1 Cut four strips of gummed paper to length, approximately 50mm (2in) longer than the paper edges. Immerse the paper in a tray (or bath) containing enough water to cover the sheet, and leave for a few moments before lifting it out and allowing the water to run and drip off. Lay the sheet gently on the board, making sure that the edges run parallel to the board and the margins are even. Use a sponge to gently smooth the paper to eliminate any air bubbles and blot off excess moisture.

2 Dampen the gummed strips and secure all the edges of the paper to the board; overlap the paper edges by about 12mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in), and allow about 25mm (1in) to spare at the corners.



3 Use crumpled kitchen paper to gently smooth along the edges until they are flat and the moisture is even across the whole sheet. Dry flat at room temperature – angling the board can cause moisture to accumulate at the base and the gummed paper to lose its adhesion.

Drawing Techniques

Mark-making

There is such an exciting choice of pencils available to the artist that it would be impossible to include everything here. Instead, I have demonstrated a few from this vast selection in order to show some of the marks they make and how you can try out materials that may be new to you.

Rather than making just abstract marks, I like to start immediately to imagine in what context they may be used. The marks on these pages were made on a smooth, white paper. The same movements and pressures will almost certainly appear different on other surfaces, so experiment and see what happens.

Graphite pencils



The hard 2H is ideal for drawing with a wandering line



A 2B pencil, for general-purpose drawing, allows you to enrich your tones



The soft 9B lends itself to a more painterly approach

Coloured pencils



Artists' pencils have a thick strip of colour, encouraging a looser interpretation



Studio pencils have a slim colour strip, and are ideal for more detailed work

Graphite sticks



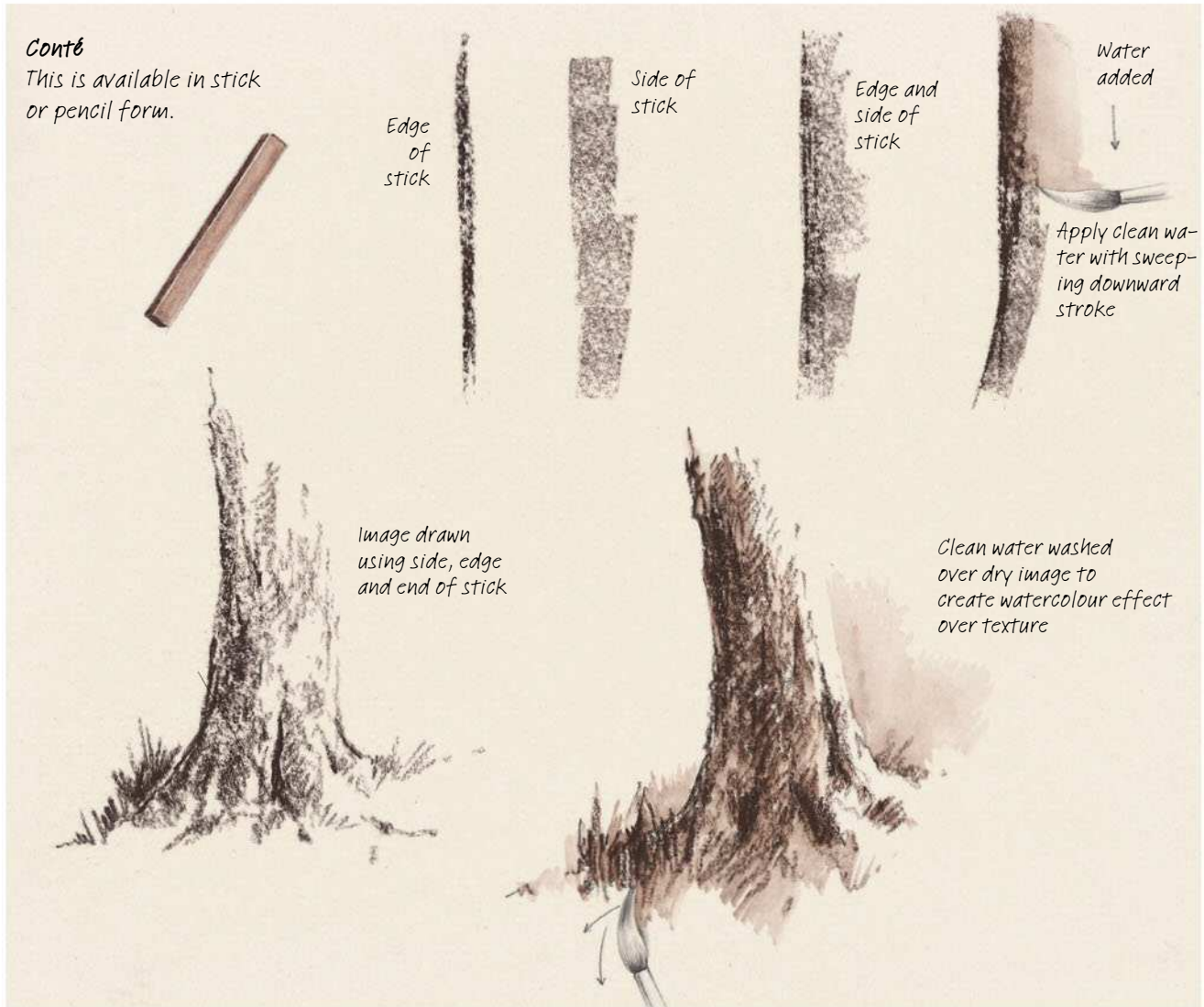
Soft sticks create rich, dark tones. They are easily smudged, so an early application of fixative is required



The darks from medium sticks are not as deep, but are compensated for by being easier to work with

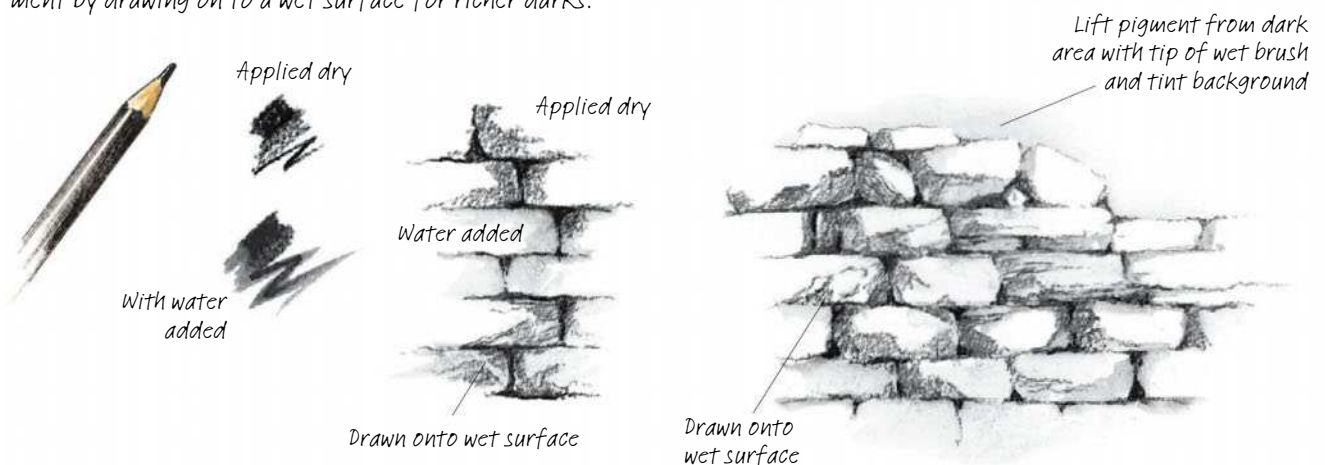


With a twisting/turning application of a hard stick, a crisp effect, useful for depicting distant reeds or grasses, can be achieved



Soft charcoal pencil

This medium is very responsive to the application of water. Experiment by drawing on to a wet surface for richer darks.



Pastels

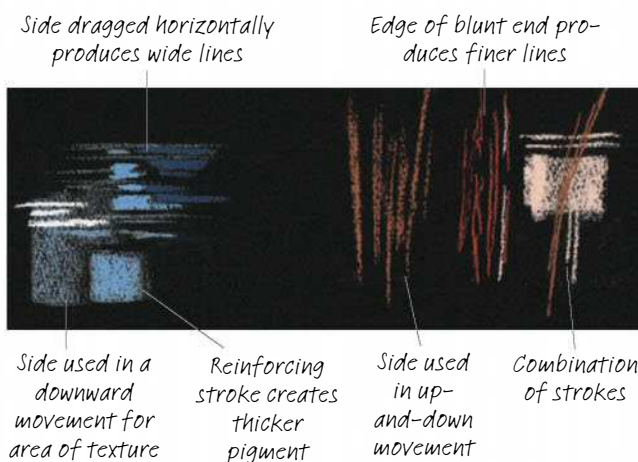
There is a wide selection of pastel-based products available; for this page, I have concentrated on soft pastel sticks and pastel pencils.

Supports for pastels

All pastels require a surface that has some texture, and are most effective when used on a coloured or tinted ground. Pastel paper, where one side is smoother than the other, is available in assorted colours. Pastel board possesses more texture; as always, try out a variety of supports to find one that suits you.

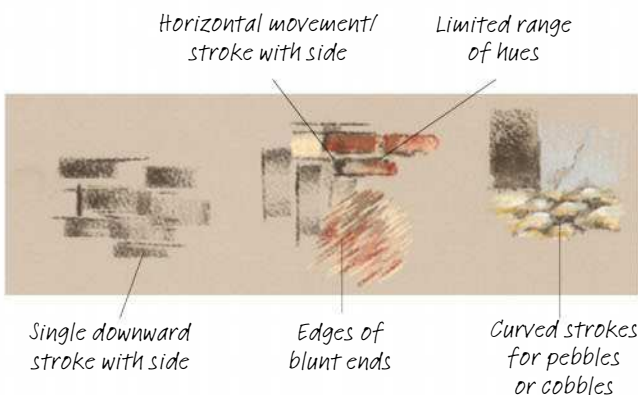
Contrasts with pastel sticks

Using a black surface allows you to see strong contrasts of pale hues and exciting textures where the ground is visible through lightly applied pastel strokes.



Bricks with sticks

Using the side of a pastel stick to create a shape such as a brick gives you a base upon which to build other colours and marks.



Pastel sticks

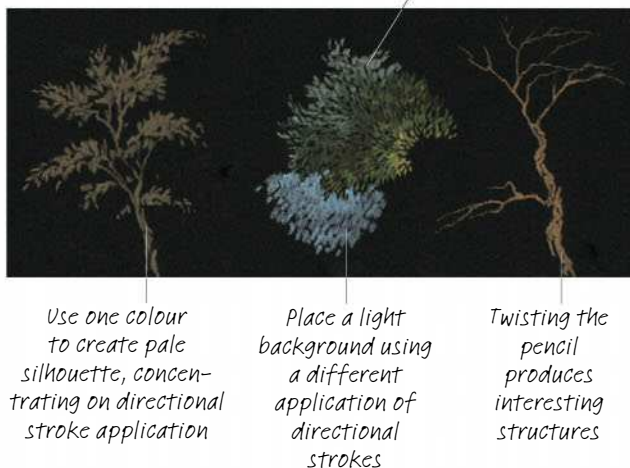
Pastel sticks can be used on their sides for broad strokes, and the edges of the blunt ends provide a crisp line for more detailed areas.

Pastel pencils

Pastel pencils can be used as an individual medium or combined with pastel sticks. Pastel pencils are also very useful for monochrome work, and, being water soluble, can be used alone in this context as well as part of mixed-media techniques.

Pastel pencil

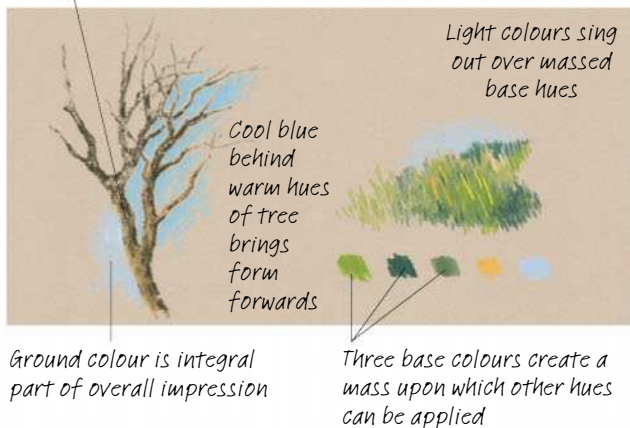
Applying a range of greens using short, curved strokes allows the black ground to enhance the image



Pencil colouring

Pastel pencils allow you to create both lines and blocks of colour easily by turning them as you work.

Erratic application of pencil creates textured bark effect



Pen and Ink

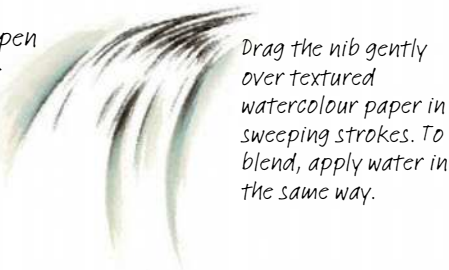
From the very fine nib of a mapping pen to wide italic nibs, there has always been a variety of pen choice. Experiment with as many different pens as possible, using both permanent and water-soluble inks, and vary the surfaces upon which you draw; this will encourage diversity of application and techniques.

Movements and marks

Just as the use of varied pressure of a pencil or brush on paper creates variation and interest of line and tone, so can you do this with a pen. Again, in the same way as pencil and paint react in different ways to different surfaces, so do pens.

Water work

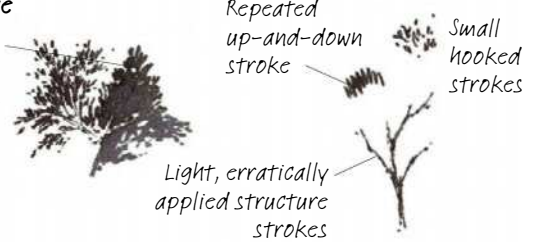
A fountain pen need not be just for writing.



Drag the nib gently over textured watercolour paper in sweeping strokes. To blend, apply water in the same way.

A feeling for foliage

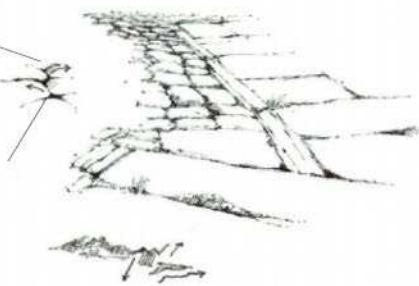
Water added to increase intensity over non-permanent ball-pen ink



Cobble contours

Very lightly applied curved lines follow form of cobble

For shadow (recess) shape, pen gently touches surface of paper with limited movement for negative shape



Italic pens

The chisel shape of italic pens provides three alternatives for use. Flat pressure produces solid or textured bands (depending upon the pressure exerted); with the nib turned, the thin strip contributes to a variety of fine lines; and by turning to the point you will be able to draw as if using a fine-tipped pen.



Tree-trunk texture

Undulating pressure lines



Stippling

Fine
Wandering lines
Heavier

Directional
lines

Cross
hatch

Demonstration stroke using firm application of pen



Lifting pressure creates texture on backingford surface



Chisel side applied with horizontal and zigzag movements to suggest reflections on water surface



Short stroke using chisel side



Head of rush created with series of short overlapping block strokes

Long stroke using narrow side

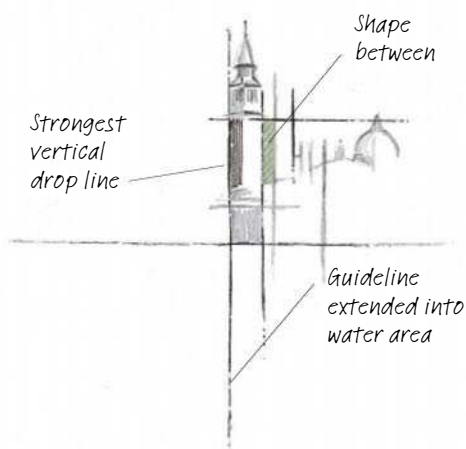


Wide part of leaf created using same movement as demonstration stroke

Exercise in Accuracy

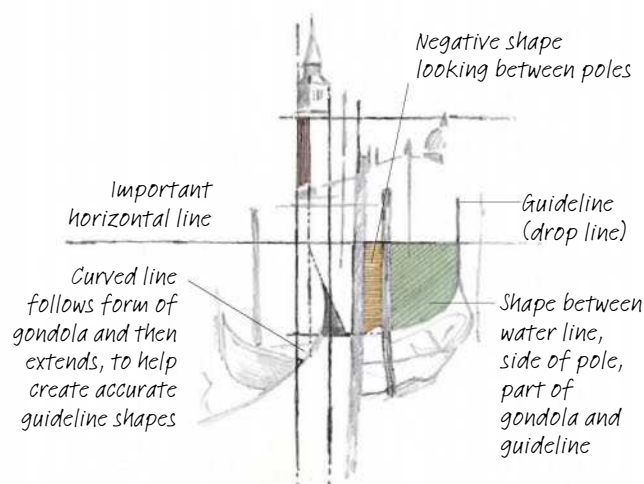
This demonstration is an exercise, a set of mark placings designed to improve your observation skills and drawing ability – where to start and in what sequence to move from one area to another as you piece together the image(s) you have chosen to depict. This way of working may be applied to any subject, and it may be helpful to approach the drawing through a series of check points – they refer to this particular picture, but you can adapt the sequence to your own picture.

- Start with the strongest vertical; a vertical line drawn down the side of a dominant form, or a guideline, can be established vertically as a basis from which to work. In the views here, the strongest vertical is down the shadow side of the distant tower.
- Once the line is drawn, think of it as a drop line and extend it below the base of the tower, down into the water. You can then use it to help position other parts of the picture.
- The next guideline is to be drawn along an important horizontal, in this case the obvious waterline.
- To start relating the shapes below the horizontal line, extend two guidelines from either side of the tower downwards, crossing the horizontal line, and start looking for negative shapes and shapes between.
- Negative shapes are the ones we see between objects. I have indicated (right) a negative shape (yellow area) between two vertical poles and a piece of canvas on a gondola. Between the two poles you can see the water beyond.
- A shape between is the shape drawn on the paper that is between some parts of objects and a guideline. Shown here in green, it helps place objects in relation to each other.



Scaffolds

With this method of observation drawing you are erecting a scaffold of structure lines upon which your images may be built. To avoid getting lost among the scaffolding, it is a good idea to tone some areas as solid shapes – in this scene the poles are an obvious choice for this treatment – as well as a few tonal blocks for distant buildings. This will give you points of reference.



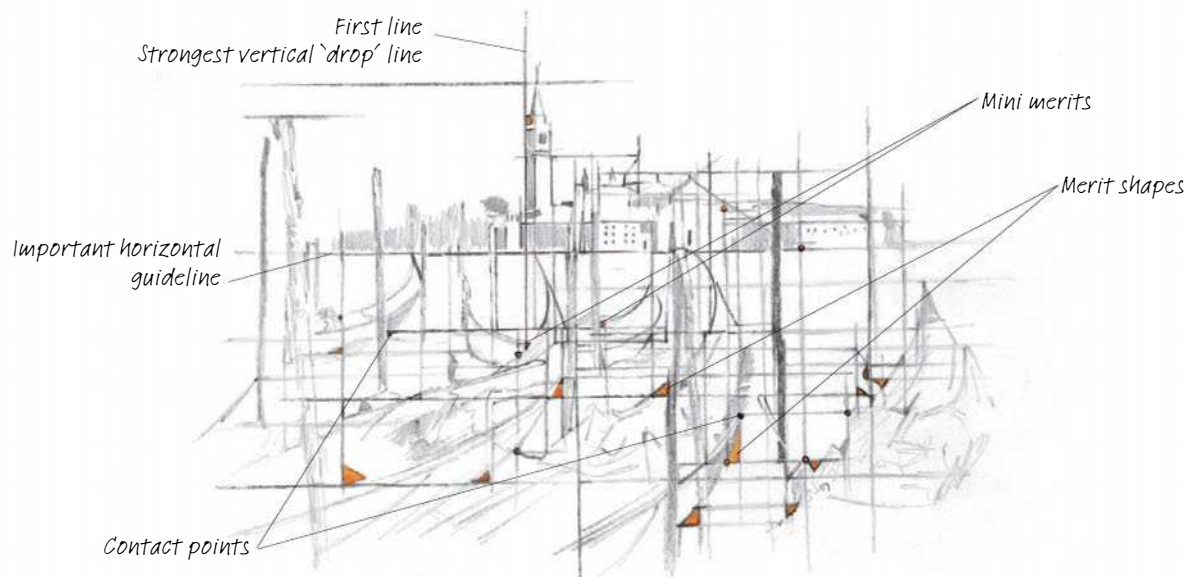
Merit points

To encourage enjoyment you can give yourself merit points along the way. On the illustration opposite above I have indicated 'mini merits' and 'mini shapes'. A mini merit is where you recognise a tiny shape between and note it with a view to establishing relationships within your scaffold lines. A merit shape is a larger, more obvious (three-sided) shape, usually with two sides from an object and the third in the form of a guideline.

Contact points

Contact points can be visual – where two objects cross behind or in front of each other visually, although in fact they are some distance apart – or physical, where they do actually touch. I have placed large dots on the illustration opposite above to show some instances.

Look along the relevant guideline between these contact points plus other lines that occur in between, to see how the objects relate using the vertical and horizontal scaffold. You now need to train your eye and practise drawing shapes accurately – squares and rectangles mainly, with curved lines crossing them at certain points – and in this way, you can create your own grid to construct a pictorial composition.



Solving perspective problems

Using guidelines correctly should remove problems with perspective. If every shape and line drawn is in the correct relationship with the others within the basic scaffold, you need only remove the structure lines of the scaffold to have a drawing that works.

Removing the scaffold

Whether placed as part of an accuracy exercise or swiftly positioned to help establish main areas in relation to each other as part of a looser interpretation, guidelines need only be obvious for the initial part of the drawing, where you rely on them for accurately placing the components. If guidelines are drawn lightly, overworking with bolder lines and tones as the drawing progresses

will cause them to become absorbed and finally lost by the time the work is complete.

Alternatively, guidelines can be established boldly on layout or copier paper and corrected or altered repeatedly until you are pleased with their placing. Then it is only a matter of tacking your drawing to a window, placing a clean sheet of paper over the top, and taking off (tracing) the main, important areas onto the new sheet of clean paper, omitting the guidelines. The final stage is to develop your drawing in line and tone, using the lightly traced image on a new sheet of paper.

When you have trained your eye and learnt how to depict shapes between accurately, the perspective within your composition will also be accurate.



Watercolour Techniques

Making Marks – Brushstrokes

When practising brushstrokes in watercolour, because the marks are important in these exercises, it is helpful

to work either with neutral hues or in monochrome. The marks here demonstrate how to mix useful neutrals.



Place brush on paper

Sweep stroke to side

Add clean water to blend

Place a series of shapes, leaving white paper between

Suggest negative shadow shapes

Fill in white areas with enriched shadow tone

Enrich shadow areas

By adding a third colour you can change the neutral



Tacking stitch strokes

Merged to suggest textured surfaces

Squeeze wet end of old brush to form chisel shape, and apply short, horizontal brick-shaped strokes for wall

Bring more of the original alizarin into the mix to give a warmer hue

Curved strokes and swirls suggest rounded stones and cobbles

Diluted washes can be overpainted

Foliage impressions

In depicting everything from areas of countryside, through town and village gardens, to city parks and tree-lined avenues, you need to consider how to give the impression of foliage mass or individual leaves.

Demonstrated here is a series of foliage brushstroke movements, shown in relation to the structure of trunks and branches. By working solely in monochrome you will be able to concentrate upon the direction of stroke application and the variations in tone.

Introducing structure

Push strokes upwards

Pull strokes out and down

Suggest drooping foliage

Practise longer up and down strokes

Place an area of tone each side of a slim strip of white paper

Push the edges outwards to create interesting silhouettes

While blotted area is still damp, drop in darker tones

Add water in places to reduce depth of tone

Slim strip between wider areas

Start with strong pigment

Blot gently to produce paler tone

Add a little more water to each new area

Foliage mass using a variety of strokes, with longer up-and-down movements introducing structure effects

Exercises

The best way to develop drawing and painting skills is to make learning fun, and to create little exercises that you really enjoy.

Sometimes if a painting goes wrong, once you have accepted what has happened you can then play about with it, knowing you cannot spoil what has already

gone wrong. This attitude can lead to a new freedom of expression.

It is also possible to play with marks on a clean sheet of paper. This 'play time' is an opportunity to develop knowledge, understanding and, as a result of these, confidence in your art.

Go for a globule

Place a globule of strong pigment mixed with plenty of water



Push the globule upwards and outwards using the tip of your brush



Create interesting and uneven edges to establish a foliage mass silhouette

Gather the globule and pull downwards from the main mass with individual strokes



Mixture should accumulate at base to form reservoir



Increase side of area covered by impression of foliage mass

Add strokes to indicate branches and twigs

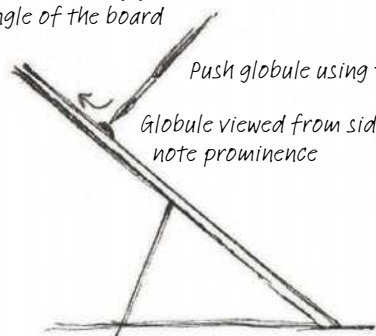
Continue downwards with globule

Before the image has dried, blot gently using a scrunched sheet of kitchen roll, pressing lightly and unevenly when you blot. Some areas will blot dry (pale) and others will retain moisture and a darker tone



On Rough-surface watercolour paper you can retain control of your globule and need only guide it gently

Retain a strong gradient for the angle of the board



Push globule using tip of brush

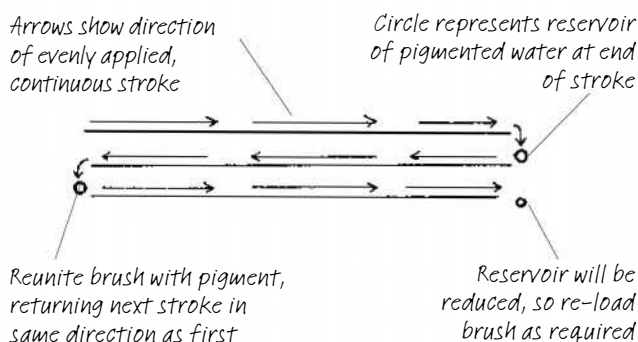
Globule viewed from side – note prominence

Washes

The examples of washes shown here rely upon the paper being supported at a sufficient angle to allow liquid to form a reservoir at the lower edge of each horizontal stroke in order that it may be taken into the next stroke across. The brush needs to be re-loaded before the reservoir has diminished, to ensure even application and the achievement of a totally flat wash.

Note that it is essential to mix enough water with your pigment to retain fluidity throughout.

Laying a wash



Flat wash

When practising a flat wash, remember to mix sufficient pigment with your water to produce the density of colour required, as colours will appear lighter when dry than when applied. It is also advisable to mix more in your palette than you think you will require, to avoid running out while the wash is being applied.

Laying a wash is a continuous process from which you cannot break off or go back over any area during its application. To do so would prevent it from being a truly flat wash.

When the final horizontal stroke has been placed, lift the remainder of the reservoir by squeezing out your brush and placing it gently along the base of the stroke to absorb excess moisture.

Flat wash



Gradated wash

A gradated wash is achieved by the addition of clean water to each brushstroke of your palette of colour as you progress down the paper.

Gradated wash

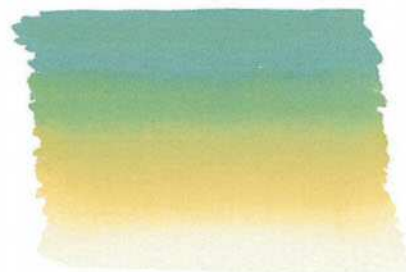


Variegated wash

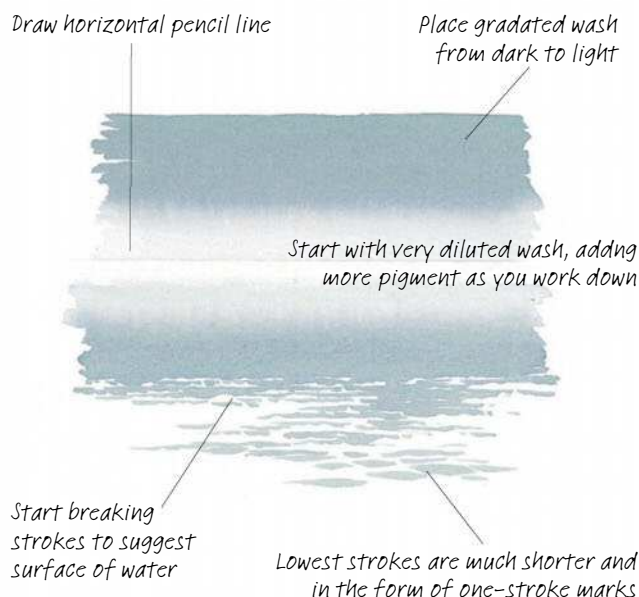
A variegated wash is achieved by using a number of colours. Where the colours blend into each other, ensure your palette wells contain enough of each different colour before you start, and that the pigment-to-water ratio is correct for your needs.

Variegated wash

Work in the same way as for the gradated wash, but instead of clean water add the next colour



Wash exercise



Blotting Off

Blotting off can be used to achieve and enhance texture, as shown in the foliage exercises, or to remove pigment completely, for example in creating cloud formations.

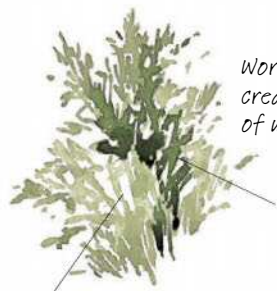
Surfaces for blotting off

It is important to understand that different effects can be achieved upon different surfaces of watercolour paper, and you should experiment with various papers to note the reactions of the method on a number of surfaces. Some papers are more absorbent than others and may produce problems if blotting off only removes extra moisture, leaving a flat area of tone.

Spontaneity of approach

This method of producing texture requires a swiftness of execution that allows the image to retain enough moisture to ensure that blotting with crumpled kitchen paper produces some areas that are not completely covered. The effect relies upon the darker pigment that is dropped in working its way and bleeding into and along some still-damp areas.

Experiment with mark-making in the form of a foliage mass on a barely absorbent surface



Working quickly and freely, create interesting arrangement of marks to suggest foliage

Immediately drop in some dark pigment to spread into still-damp areas

Gently blot whole area while still quite wet

As the image dries, enhance the darks while retaining the lighter areas that have already dried



Blotting for clouds

To achieve untextured images, the illustration demonstrates how to create cloud formations within a flat wash.

While a flat wash was still wet, a dampened, screwed-up tissue was firmly pressed onto the surface to absorb as much pigment as possible



For crisper, clearer images, a dry tissue was pressed very firmly on to the wet paper

Lifting off for highlights

To achieve the effect of highlights by lifting off, you need plenty of pigment in your mixture, as the method relies upon pigment being absorbed into the hairs of a damp brush placed upon a wet surface. If the pigment does dry, apply a damp brush to the paint and agitate the hairs to disturb the pigment, prior to either blotting or re-applying more clean water.

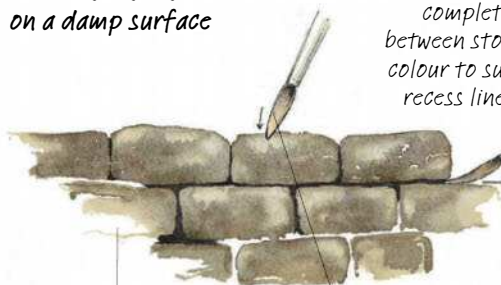
Highlighting a dry image

Agitate the surface with a brush that has been dipped in clean water to lift off some of the pigment and create a highlighted area



Creating highlights on a damp surface

When stonework is completely dry, fill in between stones with dark colour to suggest shadow recess lines and shadow shapes



Loosely paint series of brick-shaped stones using plenty of pigmented water

With brush dipped into clean water and squeezed dry, place hairs against wet paint to lift off moisture and absorb pigment

Wet into Wet

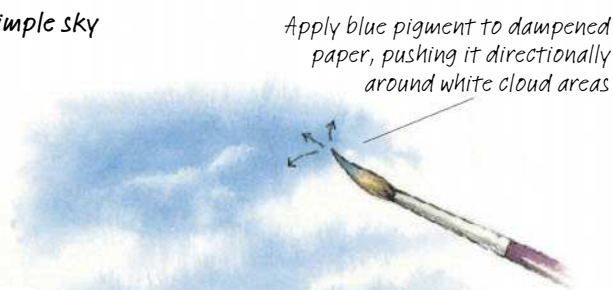
Two ways in which the wet-into-wet method may be approached are demonstrated here – by working on a wet or dampened surface; and by dropping in additional tone or colour on a wet or damp painted surface, such as within an image or background area.

Working on a damp surface

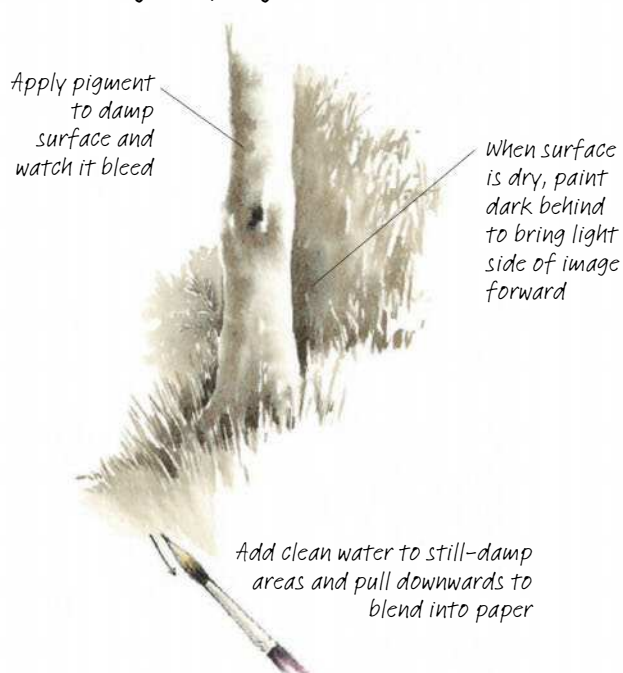
A simple example of this method is to paint a sky by dampening the paper surface with clean water before painting blue areas, retaining white paper shapes that indicate cloud formations.

A more complex example of this method is shown in the tree trunk against foliage. Although this painting is in monochrome (a mix of blue and brown to create a neutral hue), there has been some colour separation, which enhances the effect.

Simple sky



Tree trunk against foliage

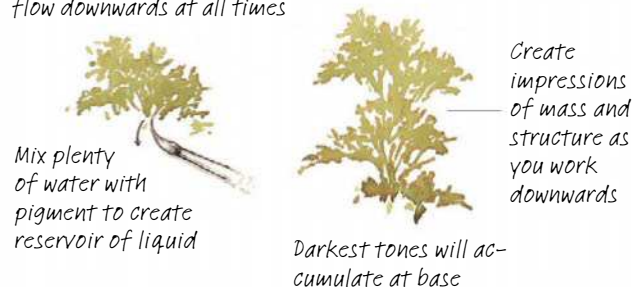


Dropping in

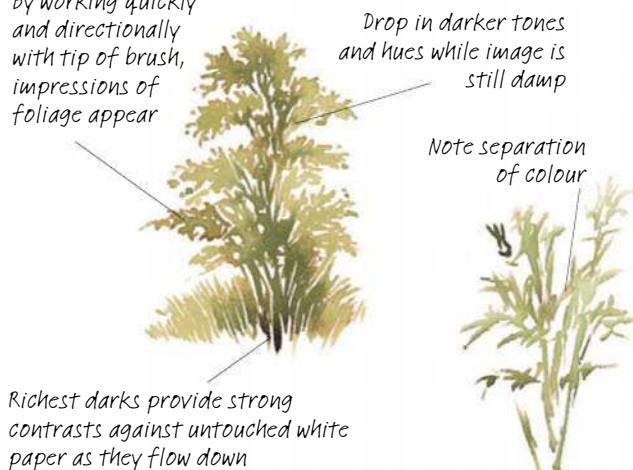
A quick and freely applied image can be enhanced by dropping in additional colours/tones while still wet to enhance the dark, shadow areas. This is useful to achieve richness in shadow recesses at the base of a form.

Direction of movement

Work with your board angled to encourage pigment to flow downwards at all times

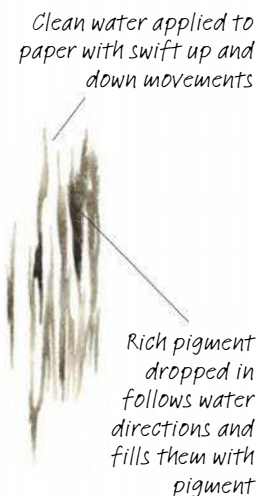


By working quickly and directionally with tip of brush, impressions of foliage appear



Exercise

The image at left was made by drawing a quick impression with a brush using clean water only. To indicate where the water has been applied, angle the paper away from you from time to time so you can see the sheen upon the paper's surface. Gently drop in pigment against the wet areas only, from where it swiftly spreads outwards into other wet areas so that pigmented shapes appear.



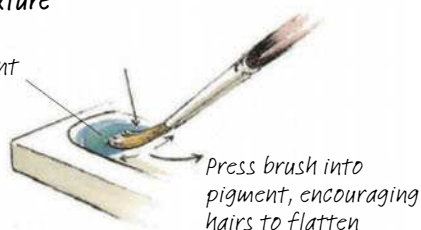
Drybrush and Wet on Dry

Drybrush

When the pigment on a brush has almost dried before it is applied to the paper's surface, it produces a textured effect. Dragging a brush prepared in this way across a flat surface can create interesting treatments for impressions of sparkling water and texture on wood and stone.

Laying a flat texture

Place small amount of pigment and water in palette



Drag pigmented, flattened hairs swiftly across textured surface of the watercolour paper

Laying a contoured texture

Paint wood image in varied tones

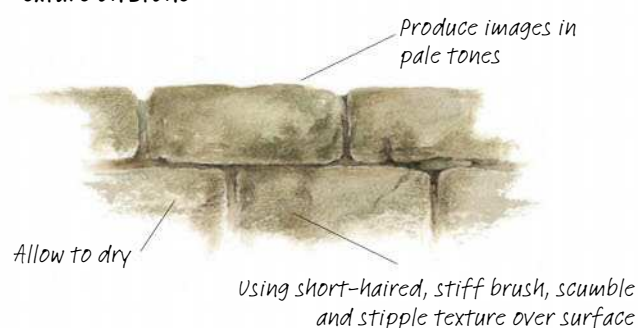


When image has dried, drag drybrush across surface to create textured effect

Wet on dry

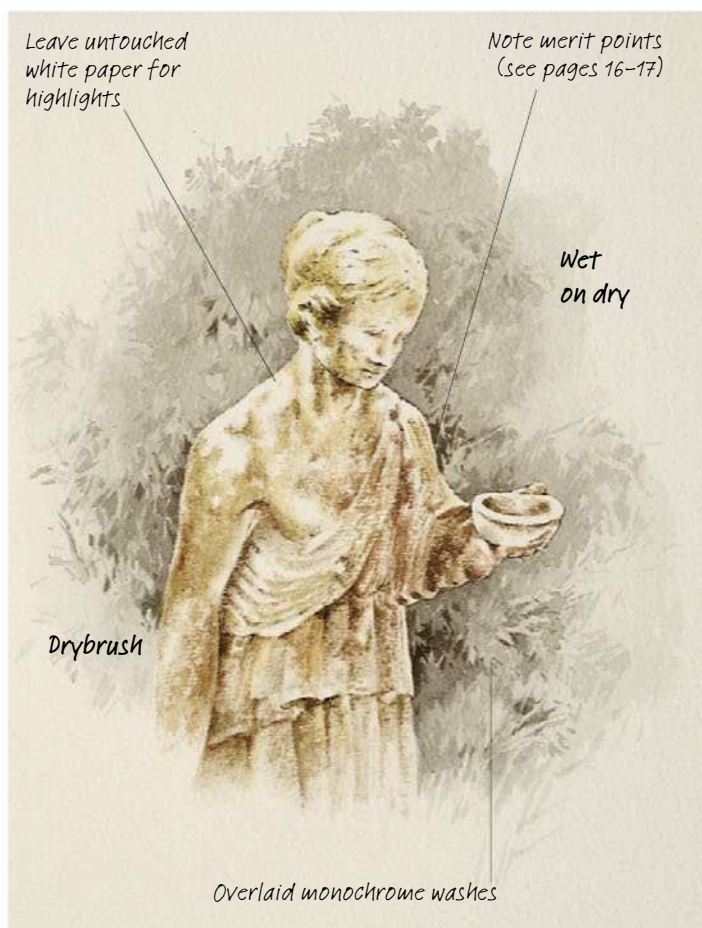
A good way to practise this approach is using monochrome. By working onto a background area that has been painted and allowed to dry, using wet pigment as an overlay of shapes, you can suggest depth with a variety of tones.

Texture on stone



Combined methods

This illustration demonstrates both methods combined. A stone statue with a textured surface was depicted using the drybrush treatment, and was placed in front of a foliage background depicted in monochrome using the wet-on-dry method.



Resists

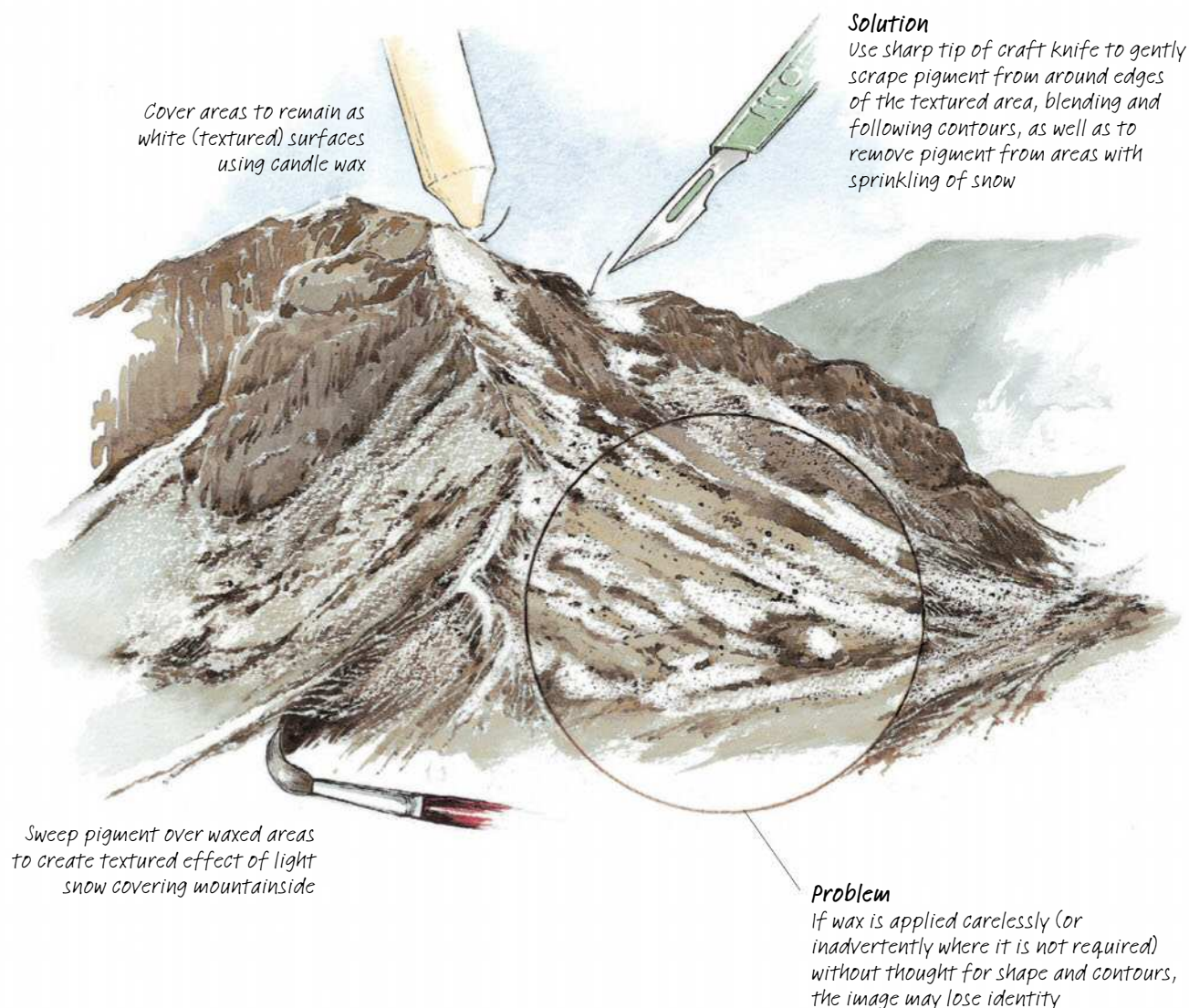
A resist method is when part of the paper's surface is coated with a substance that prevents any overlaid washes of pigment reaching the paper underneath. But, the resist methods shown here can sometimes create problems as well as solving them.

Candle wax

Applying candle wax to the paper causes the surface to resist application of pigment to the extent that

a textured effect is achieved. It is ideal for use in the depiction of sparkling water and many other effects, and the method is shown here as an aid to achieving the impression of a light snow covering on an otherwise bare mountain.

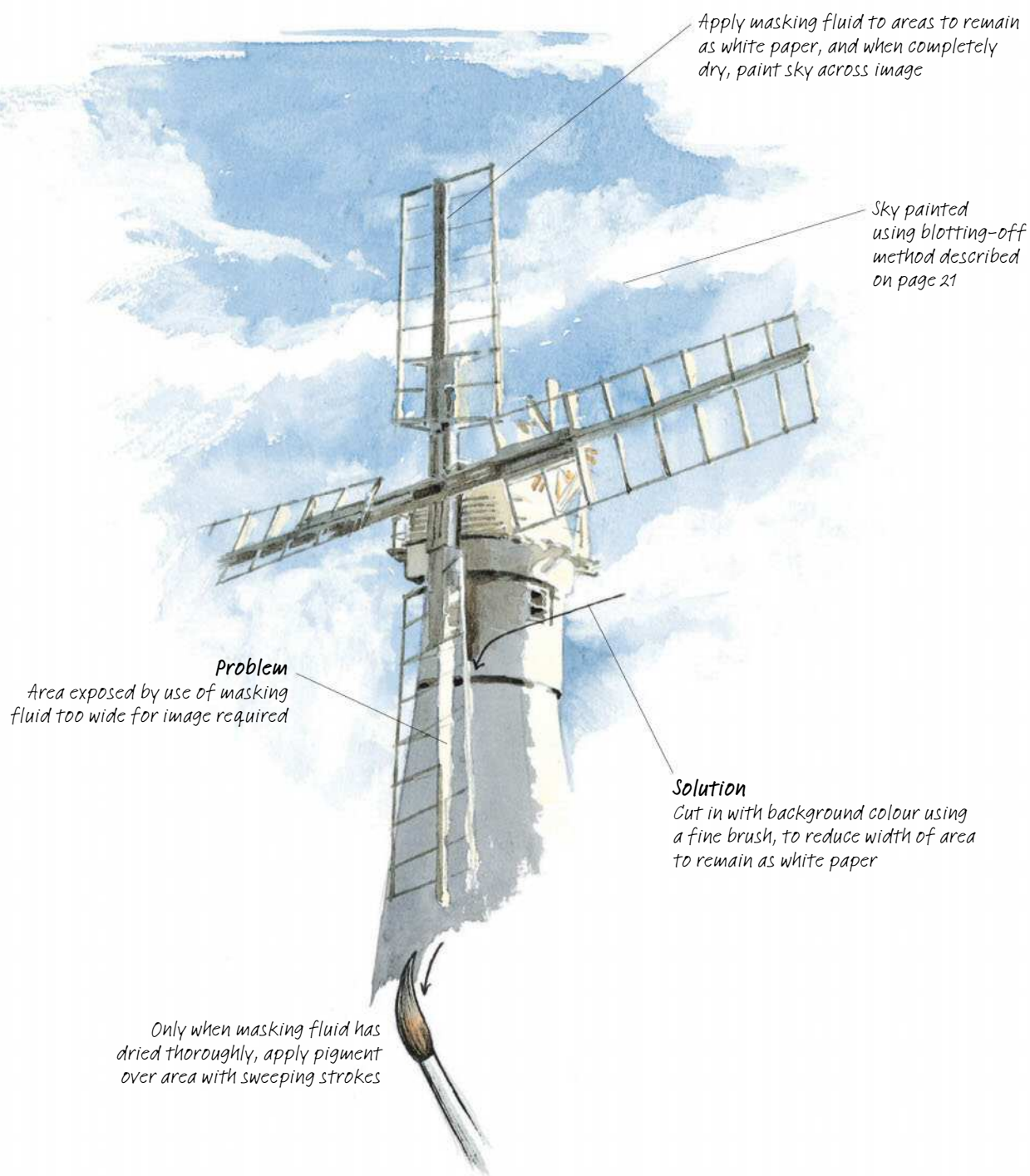
With a bulky mark-making object such as a candle you may experience difficulty at times when trying to depict delicate shapes, and a solution using a sharp craft knife is included in the illustration.



Masking fluid

This liquid, which is rubbery when dry, is applied to the paper using an old brush, a pen nib or the special applicator attached to a plastic bottle containing the fluid. When the paint has thoroughly dried, you can

remove the rubbery substance gently by passing a finger across the surface or, in some instances, actually pulling it away. It is not always easy to achieve fine lines with masking fluid, and the illustration demonstrates the kind of problem that can occur, and how to solve it.



Watercolour Pencils

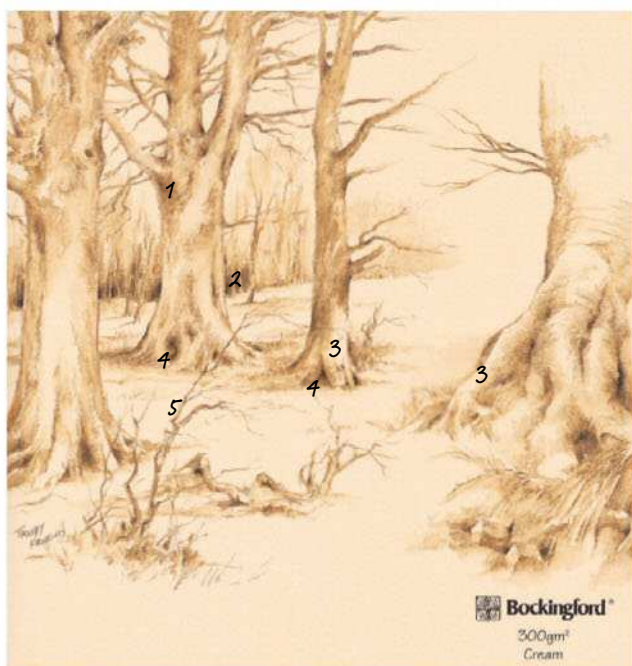
Watercolour pencils are a very versatile medium: there are numerous ways in which they can be used upon tinted or white paper surfaces – either on their own or combined with other mediums.

Working on a tinted ground

A straightforward application of watercolour pencils is to draw the image onto watercolour paper and then gently disturb and blend the pigment with a little clean

water on the tip of a brush. This effect is enhanced by working on a tinted surface, and can look very effective executed in monochrome. Bockingford tinted papers are ideal for this method, and were used for the exercises on this page.

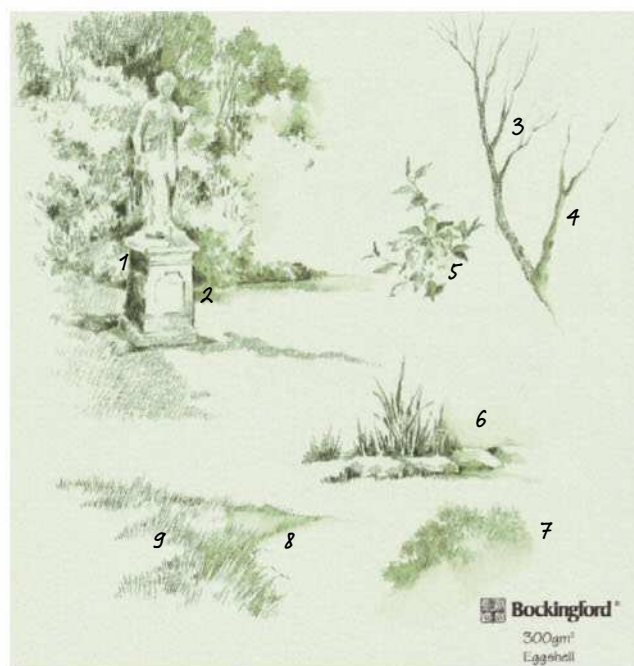
Choose a coloured pencil that complements the tint of the paper and subject, and if fine detail is important for the overall effect, make sure you retain a sharp point on the pencil throughout the drawing.



Woodland trees

The images on the left show the spacing of the dominant trees in the foreground, with other trees gathered close together in the background. On the right is a detailed close-up study showing tree roots, rocks and grasses.

- 1 Dark shadow area in front of light background
- 2 Darks behind light form
- 3 Leave some areas of untouched paper
- 4 Create rich dark areas of contrast
- 5 Superimpose delicate drawing in foreground to help create feeling of distance



Garden setting

The solid stone statue contrasts with a more delicate depiction of background foliage. The other little detail studies give an opportunity for close observation and experimentation with texture and water application.

- 1 Dark in front of lighter background
- 2 Dark background behind light form
- 3 Dry on dry
- 4 Blended with water
- 5 Detailed interpretation of individually drawn/toned leaves
- 6 Study depicting contrasts of tone, shape and texture
- 7 Adding water to foliage mass
- 8 Water gently brushed over surface
- 9 Dry on dry

Exercises

An exciting way to depict interesting textures on some rough surfaces, and to conserve your pencils, is to sharpen the pencils onto dampened paper.

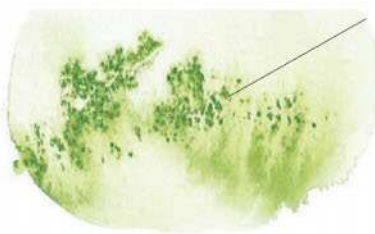
Wet an area with a brush of sufficient size to hold enough water for quick coverage. Sharpen your pencil – being careful not to encroach upon the wood – onto the wet surface. Watch the pigment spread, then with either the tip of your pencil (where lines

drawn upon contact will bleed) or a fine-tipped brush, guide the resulting marks/textures into the desired shapes. 'Happy accidents' can easily occur with this method, and it is also possible to blend pale washes of colour over the textured areas after the area has dried.

To create pale washes in your palette, sharpen the chosen coloured pencil into the well, add water, and mix to achieve your wash.

Playing with texture

Suitable effect for tree foliage

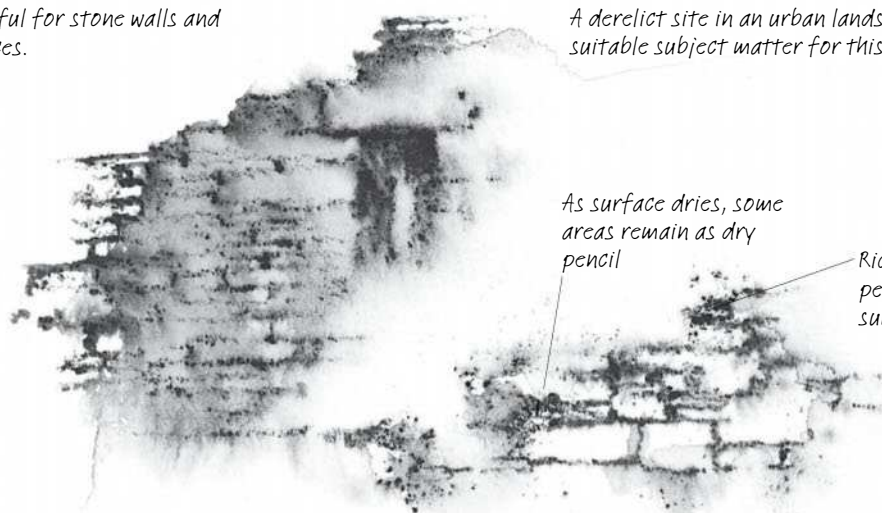


Wet paper, place tip of pencil upon wet surface and lift – repeat over area to be covered

Blending occurs where the pencil meets the very wet surface

Sharpenings method

This method is useful for stone walls and other rough surfaces.



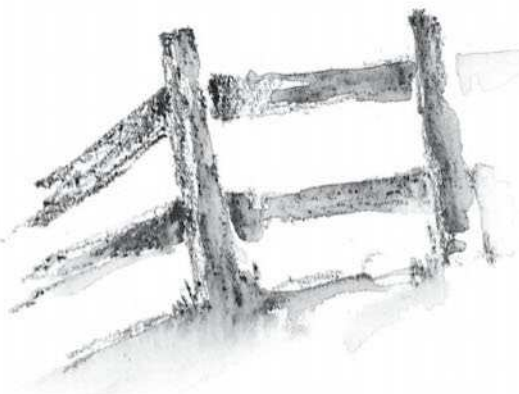
A derelict site in an urban landscape may be suitable subject matter for this treatment

As surface dries, some areas remain as dry pencil

Rich darks develop where pencil meets plenty of surface water

Pencil sharpenings on wet surface

This quick dry-on-dry sketch was touched with clean water from a brush. Note how some texture remains visible beneath the tonal wash area



Mixed-media Techniques

Introducing Gouache

In addition to being enjoyable as a medium in its own right, gouache, or body colour, can also be used effectively with other mediums.

Unlike pencil and watercolour techniques – where the white paper often plays an important part in the depiction of highlights and white areas – gouache benefits from being used on a tinted or coloured ground, which means that white and light pigments create exciting contrasts when applied on the darker hues.

Extending the drybrush technique (see page 23) into gouache on a dark support produces interesting textures when combined with normal paint coverage. When used to depict a variety of textured surfaces, this combination of techniques, incorporating the hue of the support as part of the method, can be used with or without the addition of other mediums.

Gouache on a coloured support

Here, an old boat, which could be part of an inland scene as well as by the coast, is used to demonstrate the use of gouache on a coloured support. This is an opportunity to add gouache to other water-based mediums.

Working on 600gsm (300lb) Saunders Waterford Rough paper, I applied a wash of dark olive watercolour and allowed it to dry before drawing the boat using zinc white gouache with a fine pointed brush. For the white planks I used a small flat brush.

For the build-up of colour a limited palette, of Winsor blue, Winsor green, French ultramarine, yellow ochre and burnt sienna, was mixed together as washes or with white, to cover the coloured ground. This support colour plays an important part in unifying (harmonising) the hues.

Important negative shapes through which sky is visible

Flat brush, applying paint horizontally, enables easy depiction of planks

Darkest dark (tone and colour) against lightest light for maximum contrast

Note drybrush technique over support hue

Top arrow indicates direction of strokes for planks; bottom arrow strokes suggest growth of long grasses

Arrows show direction of brushstrokes



Sweeping strokes, using round brush, contrast with shorter, flat brushstrokes depicting planks

Gouache with charcoal pencil

There are many coloured supports available that are suitable for use with gouache – here, I used a grey-tinted Bockingford 300gsm (140lb) paper.

Trees provide interesting subject matter for a delicate approach using gouache, where texture and linear work combine with looser brushwork that requires the addition of more water than the gouache method shown opposite. Where the texture on the boat was achieved by the build-up of dryer paint over the coloured

ground, here it is the charcoal drawing, beneath a watery application of paint, that produces the effects.

The use of a soft charcoal pencil necessitated the application of a layer of fixative prior to painting, as well as during the painting process, when more drawing was used to enhance certain areas. The subtle tint of the ground was used to enhance the effect by being retained within the painting. The drawing was made using minimum pressure and with frequent sharpening of the pencil.



Introducing Ink

Ink is another medium that is very effective when used alone on various paper surfaces, and the variety of techniques that can be employed with it make it a firm favourite – whether using a tight, controlled approach, a looser style or applying it very freely.

Ink and paint

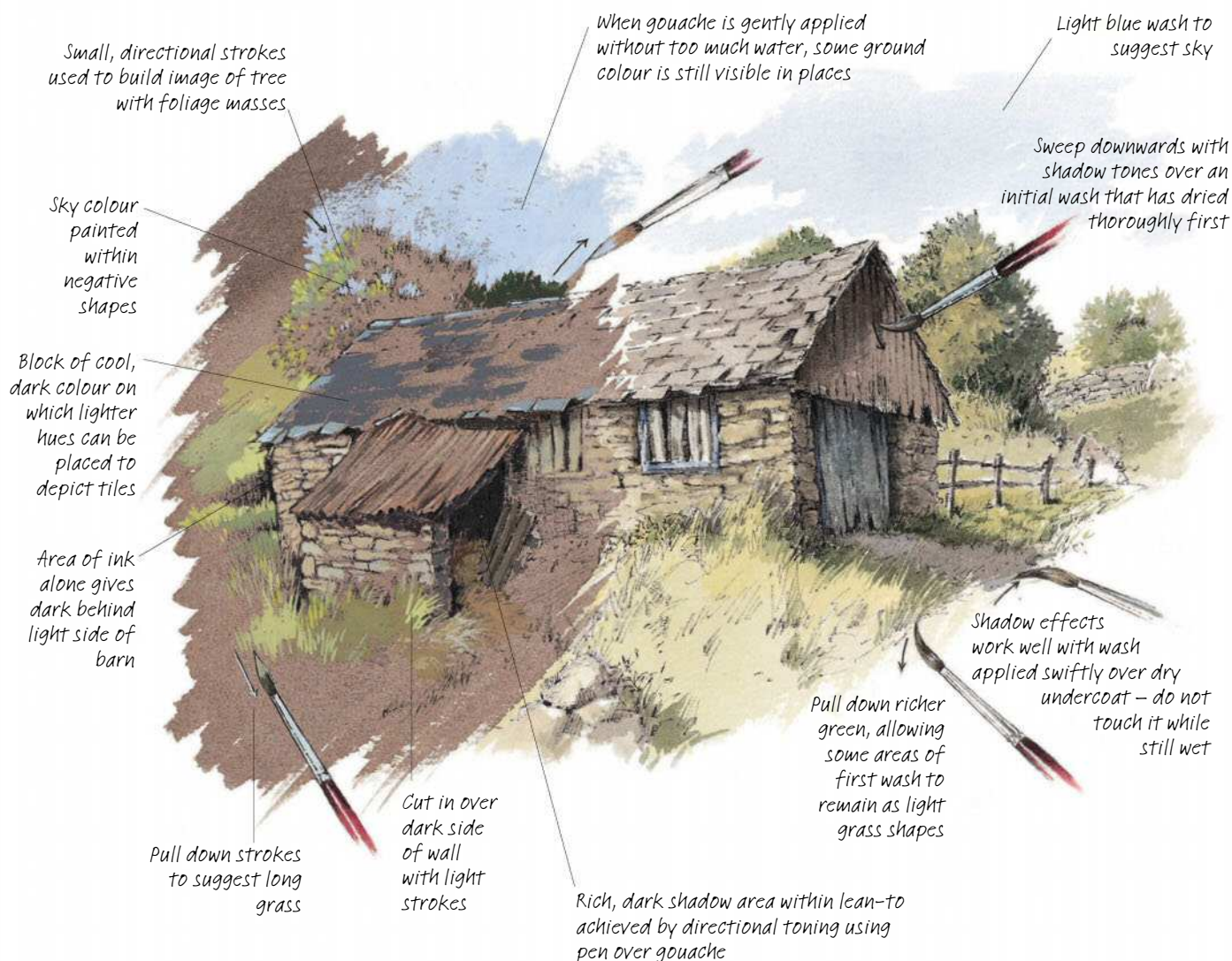
Combining ink with other mediums adds to the delights of penwork, and two options are shown here

within one image, to offer an interesting comparison. Gouache is used on the left, so you can compare the lighter approach of a watercolour tint on the right.

Derelict barns that lean and crumble give the artist an opportunity to explore textured surfaces, which can be effectively achieved with ink on watercolour paper and when ink is used over paint.

The whole image was drawn using a fine 0.1 drawing pen on Saunders Waterford 180gsm (90lb) Rough paper.

A wash of medium- to dark-toned neutral watercolour was placed over the drawn image. The inkwork is clearly visible through the paint, which is the tinted ground upon which the gouache painting is built



Choices for Mixed Media

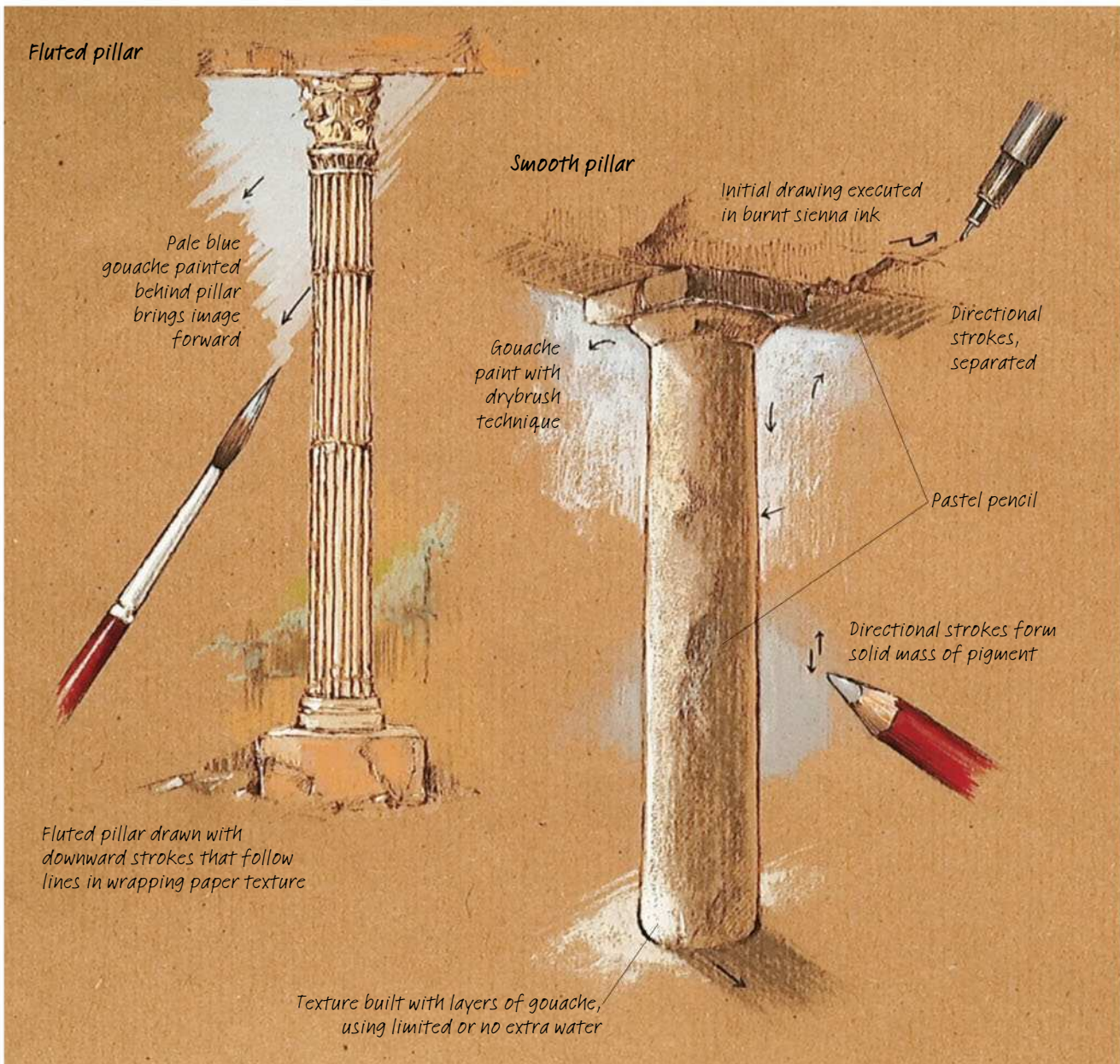
Apart from the combinations shown on the previous pages, there are numerous others you could try, including watercolour pencils with ink, watercolour pencils on a watercolour-tinted support, pastel pencils and watercolour, graphite pencils with watercolour, ink and charcoal, and many more. When used in the same way as watercolour washes, acrylic paint combines well with ink, charcoal, and so on.

For these learning exercises, you can also experiment with unusual supports: here, I used ordinary brown wrapping paper, matt side up, where the vertical lines of the paper can help with depicting certain subjects.

Architectural features

A fluted pillar is made easier to represent if you use the vertical lines in the paper as a guide. For this example I mixed three different media: a 0.1 fine drawing pen, using burnt sienna ink for the initial drawing, gouache – as a wash to indicate a pale blue sky as background, and the drybrush method, respectively – and pastel pencils for blocking in some colour.

Pastel pencils work well on the surface of wrapping paper, as does ink, and the strong contrasts of the highlighted and light-coloured areas can produce some interesting effects.



Correcting and Repairing Mistakes

Correcting pencil and charcoal

Apart from using a rubber to erase errors, there are other ways of correcting mistakes.

When working on a drawing that requires the surface to remain pristine for final presentation, it is advisable to avoid mistakes by careful pre-planning and tentative application of the drawing material in the first stages. You can then build up the images slowly and with great care, gently erasing errors as they occur and reinforcing the drawing in controlled layers.

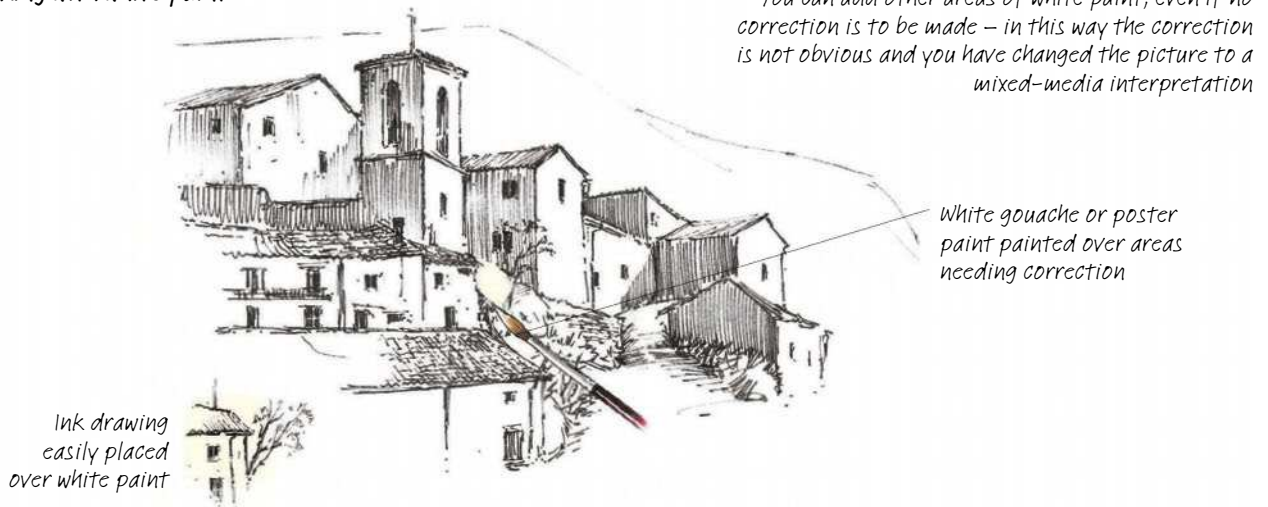
For bold, spontaneous work and freely applied sketched images, there are other options where even the methods by which drawings or sketches are altered and corrected become part of the work itself and

enhance its development. For any delicate and detailed work, the importance of preliminary, pre-planning stages cannot be over-stressed. The exercise in accuracy (see pages 16–17) should help with this approach.

Freely applied pencil and charcoal

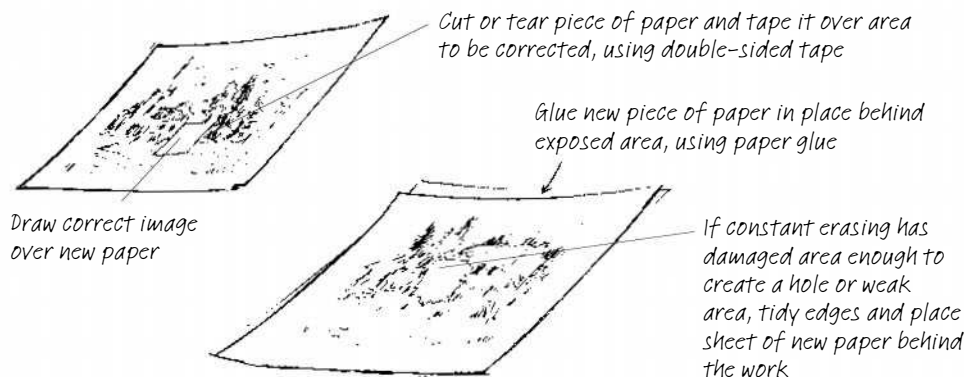
When mistakes occur in pencil and charcoal work, as well as in mixed-media techniques, the two methods of correction shown here are blocking out the area to be corrected using white paint, and cutting or tearing a new piece of paper to be taped in place over the error, or from the back of the paper if the area of error has itself been cut or torn out. It's best to try these methods out on scrap paper first.

Blocking with white paint



Cutting or tearing paper

Sometimes the shape of the new piece of paper can be cut to fit between areas of drawing where lines around forms coincide with the edges of the paper shape. The correction paper will then not appear too obvious

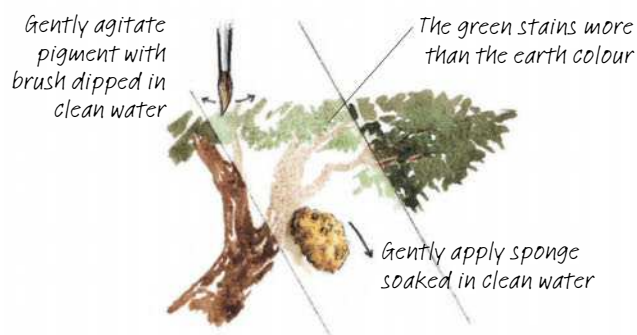


Repairing mistakes in watercolour

When using heavyweight watercolour paper, some mistakes are easy to repair using the following methods.

Sponging off

Gently applying a sponge soaked in clean water to the paper to remove most of the offending pigment (unless it is a strong staining colour) allows you to re-paint when the area has dried. Sometimes gently agitating the pigment using a brush containing clean water can also achieve this effect.



Scraping off

Heavier papers permit you to gently lift the unwanted pigment from the surface by scraping or scratching with a sharp craft knife. However, once the paper has been affected by this method it might not always be possible to add more pigment over the area successfully. Practise the method as an exercise to understand its limitations.



Rescue methods

If the composition of your drawing or painting is not developing to your satisfaction, cut a viewfinder to suitable proportions and isolate a part of the picture with which you are pleased. This area can then be cut out and mounted, and the unwanted pieces can be discarded.

Whether it is a drawing or a painting that is not progressing in the way you anticipate, it is worth considering the option of turning it into a mixed-media work in order to preserve and develop it.



Cut viewfinder and isolate part of picture

Developing details

When drawing a sketch from life and limitations of time, weather or comfort inhibit your interpretation, it is worthwhile sketching a few details of some of the confused areas, using the space around the main image.

Sketchbook work is a valuable learning experience and teaches you to be observant as well as encouraging the development of drawing skills. We do not always produce sketches with a view to turning them into paintings at a later date, but when areas of a sketch become confused, it is a good idea to re-draw around the main image in the form of details.



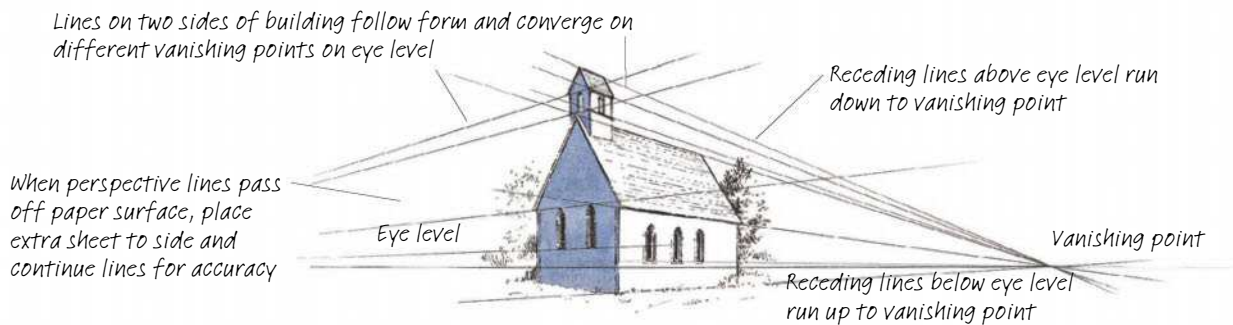
Perspective in Composition

Composing a picture involves numerous considerations, among them placing a focal point, guiding the observer's eye through the picture to maintain interest, juxtaposing shapes, using contrasts (of shape as well as tone), what to include and what to leave out (see pages 36–37) and creating a feeling of movement. This last does not refer to just obvious movement – for example, a waterfall – but to movement of the observer's eye through and within the picture, rather than using perspective lines that cut through the composition from one side to the other.

The way a picture is divided into areas of sky and foreground (a third of one against two-thirds of the other works well), and placing the components are two other important factors; but we shall deal with perspective first.

Perspective in buildings

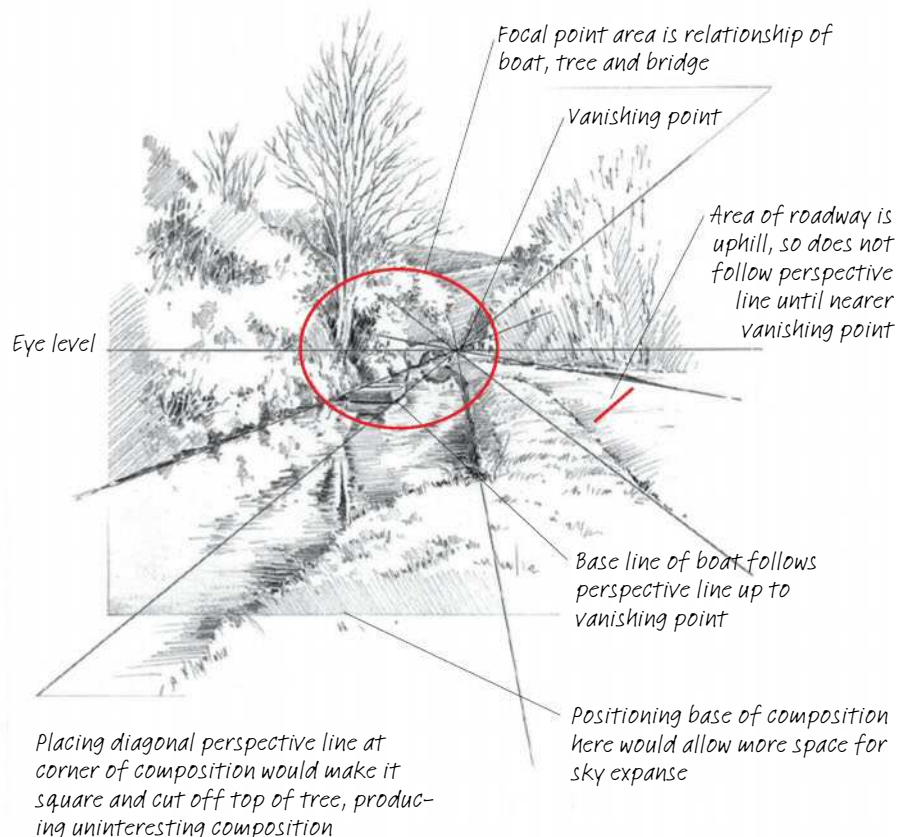
This diagram covers some of the straightforward aspects of perspective lines used on a building where parts of two sides are visible. Taking a strong horizontal line through at eye level, you can see how the lines converge at two separate vanishing points.



Perspective relationships

This illustration works towards considerations of pictorial composition involving elements at the outer edges of the picture. The relationship of a strong vertical tree formation against the horizontal rectangle of a boat seen as a perspective angle, and a semicircular form of a little bridge in the distance, provides interesting contrasts of shape that are the essence of successful composition.

You do, however, need to consider the format carefully, whether it is to be viewed within a landscape or portrait presentation. The subject of this sketch is suitable for either format.



Thumbnail sketches

Drawing thumbnail sketches is one of the best ways to plan your compositions. They are quick to produce due to their size – the originals are actually about 63 x 88mm (2½ x 3½in) – which will enable you to work out areas of contrast, tone, form and movement.

Many beginners do not feel the necessity to avail themselves of this introduction to their final composition. For this reason, the series of sketches here should encourage experimentation with this useful and essential stage.

Combining observation methods

After creating a series of thumbnail sketches, you may find on drawing an enlarged image on another sheet

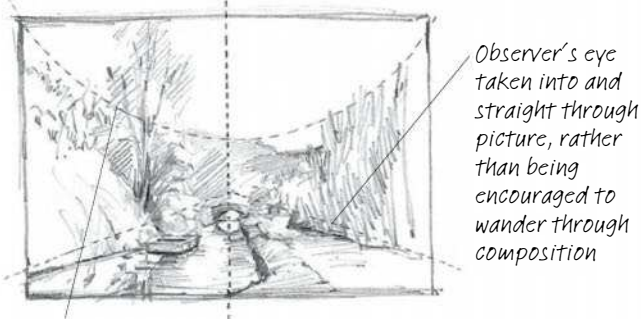
of paper, that you are experiencing doubts concerning the accuracy of the perspective. In this case it is a good idea to place a sheet of tracing paper over your drawing and add perspective lines in pencil to establish your accuracy.

You can enlarge your sketch (making a few alterations as necessary) by copying it to fit a larger sheet of paper, or, if more accuracy is required, squaring up. You can even enlarge from your small sketch using a photocopier for convenience and then using tracing paper or the window method (see page 17).

Using the guidelines method illustrated on pages 16–17 also reduces the possibility of perspective problems.

Image placing

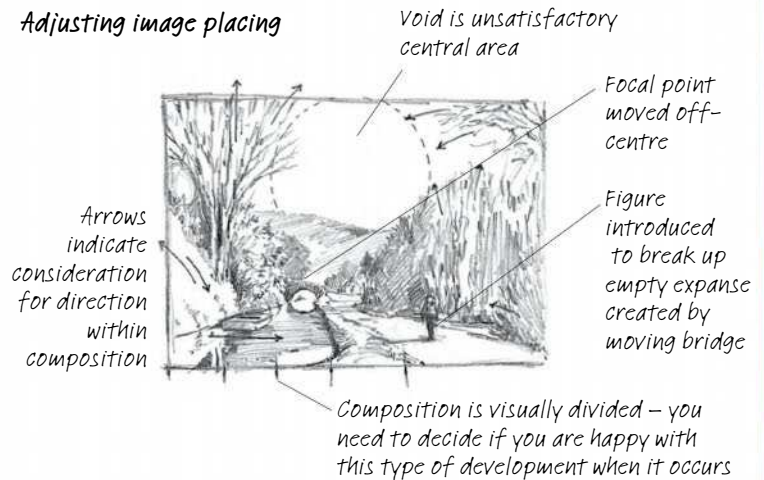
This sketch shows how easy it is to fall into the trap of placing the focal point centrally.



Note semicircular feel to placing of tree formations

Observer's eye taken into and straight through picture, rather than being encouraged to wander through composition

Adjusting image placing



Void is unsatisfactory central area

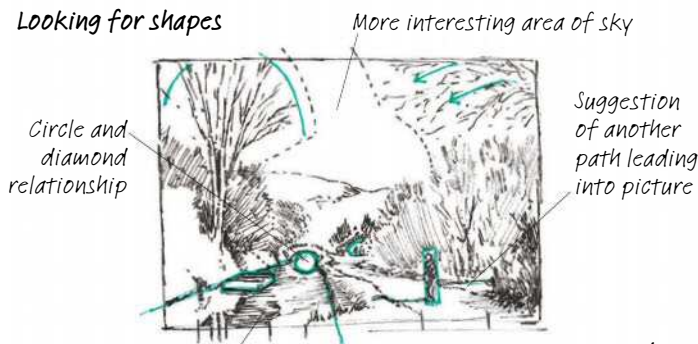
Focal point moved off-centre

Figure introduced to break up empty expanse created by moving bridge

Arrows indicate consideration for direction within composition

Composition is visually divided – you need to decide if you are happy with this type of development when it occurs

Looking for shapes



Circle and diamond relationship

More interesting area of sky

Suggestion of another path leading into picture

Reflections, shadows and open areas determine visual shapes created

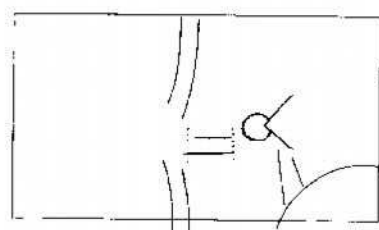
Alternative view

Using a viewfinder concentrates your attention on a particular area, rather than taking in too much of the view at one time



Small area of sky left as simple, light area, contrasting with busy foliage areas

Area treated in a neutral way to rest the eye



Viewfinder image diagram

Note some of the abstract shapes created within the composition

Interesting tonal contrasts placed effectively within mount

Small reflection of sky in contrast to darker areas of water surface

Editing In and Out

Artist's licence

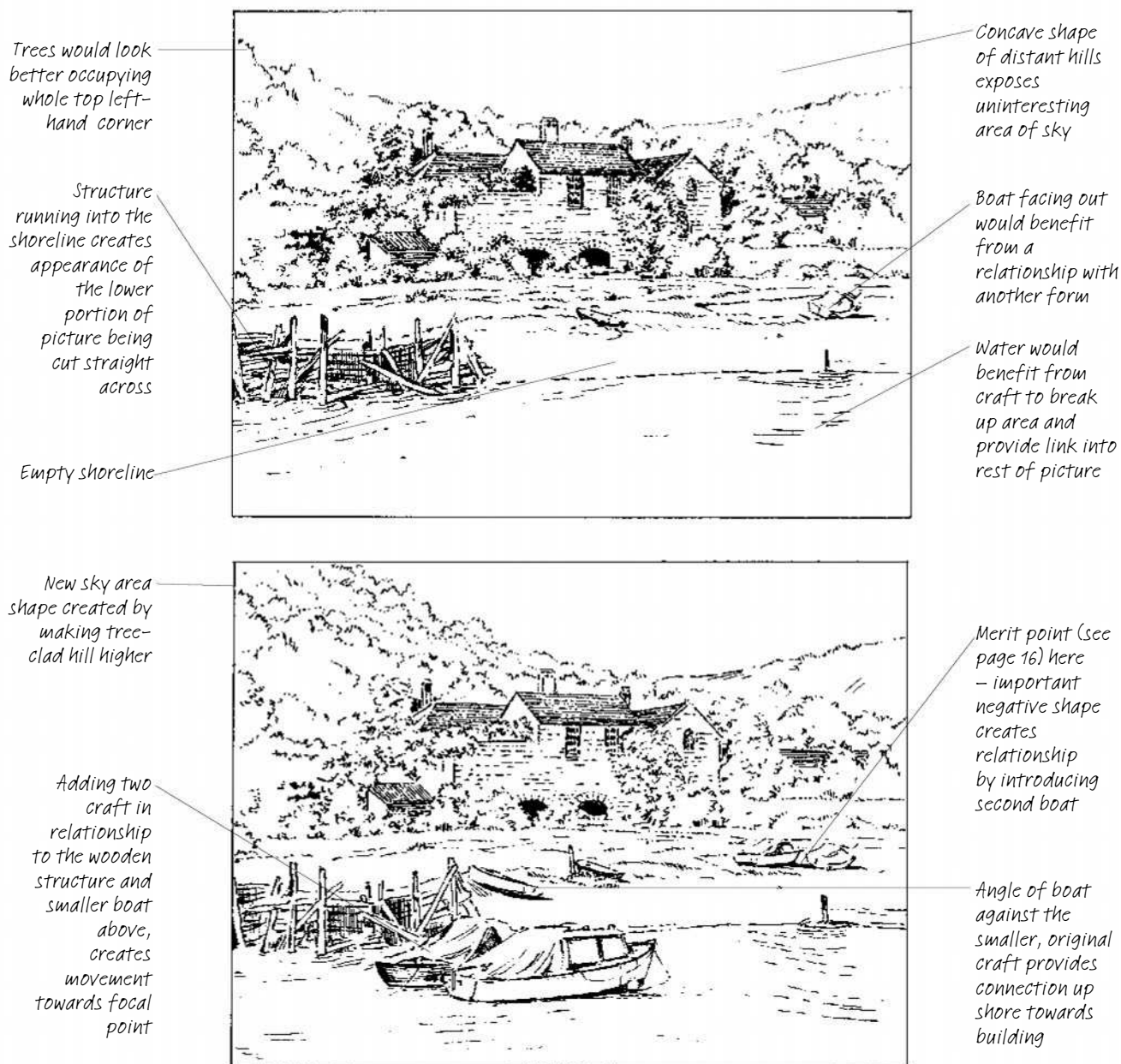
Creating a pictorial composition is more involved than simply choosing a viewpoint and, using a viewfinder, selecting an area on which to concentrate.

The term 'artist's licence', used literally, means that you can choose to disregard conventions for effect – to the extent that you are free to do as you wish with the content of your pictorial compositions. Alternatively, you can interpret it in another way by adding content or taking objects or areas out of the view, in order to

compose a better picture. These pages show examples of editing in and editing out.

Editing in

This tranquil scene provides a pleasing composition, with an interesting building, the pattern of a rotting wooden construction in the foreground and a variety of textures in the relationships of building, foliage areas, sloping ground and water. The two boats add interest in the middle ground, but the foreground is empty.



Editing out

This more complex angle, looking down upon a row of cottages and featuring a tree-clad hillside with more buildings above, requires a different set of considerations.

Using a viewfinder, as with the scene on page 35, to isolate two or three cottages, may be the answer to this overcrowded landscape. You can, therefore, edit out certain aspects to simplify the view.

This quick pen and ink layout shows positions of all buildings seen in the view



Tone

In a graphite pencil drawing, tone is seen as shades of grey between black and white; in coloured media, tone also refers to the lightness or darkness of colours.

The exercise on this page uses two colours to depict a foliage-clad structure that demonstrates the tonal range for each colour. Sepia and raw umber were mixed in a palette to produce the hue for stonework, while olive green for the foliage was taken straight from the pan.

On the opposite page are examples of working in monochrome. For the exercise on this page I used both the sepia mix and the olive green for monochrome studies that work together to produce a two-coloured image. Blue sky was added so that the paler tones at the top of the tower were clearly visible. The sepia mix and the green are kept separate, showing a complete range of tones for each, yet never mixing the two.

Before you start the exercise, make a tonal scale for each colour and experiment with the range of tones in a stonework area and foliage mass, respectively, to practise achieving a comprehensive range of tones.

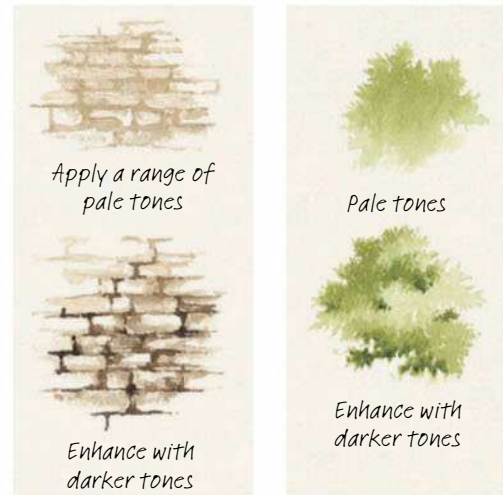
Making a tonal scale

Draw two parallel lines with a pencil for each colour. Mix the darkest hue first and paint a block of colour between the lines. Allow to dry before placing the next block. You will need to dilute the mix with a little clean water before each application until you blend the palest tone into the white paper for the last (eighth) block.

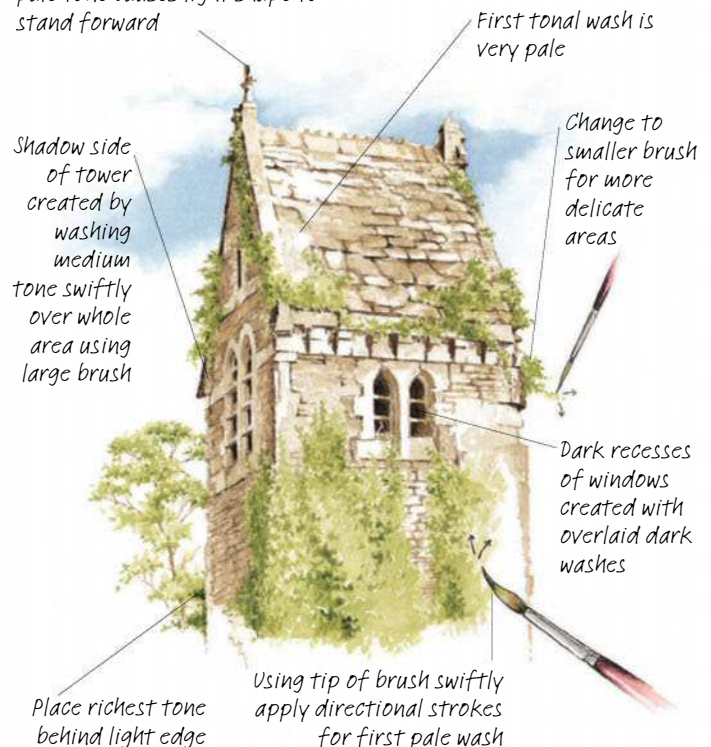


Practising tone

Using line, tone and texture, create a small area that resembles the palest expanse of stonework or foliage. When this has dried, add the next range of tones, making sure to include some areas that are as dark as the darkest tone on your scale.



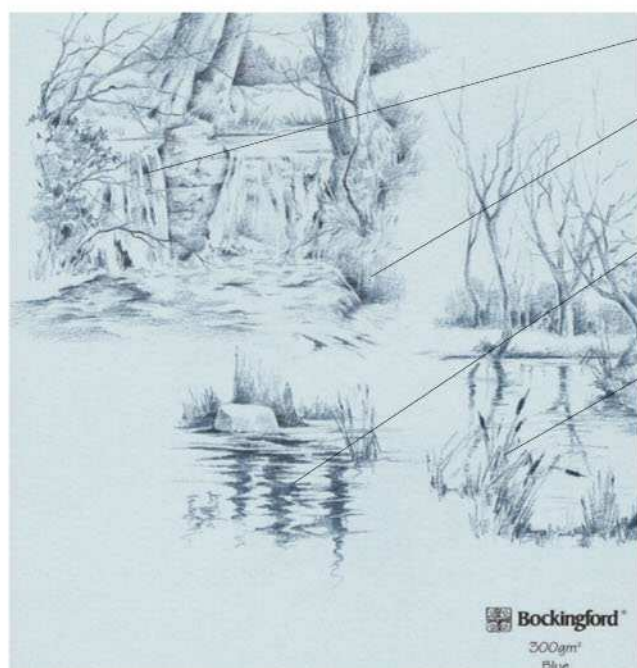
Putting darker colour behind pale tone causes light shape to stand forward



Working in Monochrome

Dry on dry

Monochrome, the use of one colour only, can be enhanced by working on a tinted ground. Even a simple coloured crayon can produce some exciting results when used on a tinted paper of similar hue.



Water movement in monochrome

These three separate coloured pencil studies show how falling water, disturbed surface and reflections, all produce a range of tones and textures that are enhanced by being depicted in one colour only.

Note rich dark areas between curtains of falling water

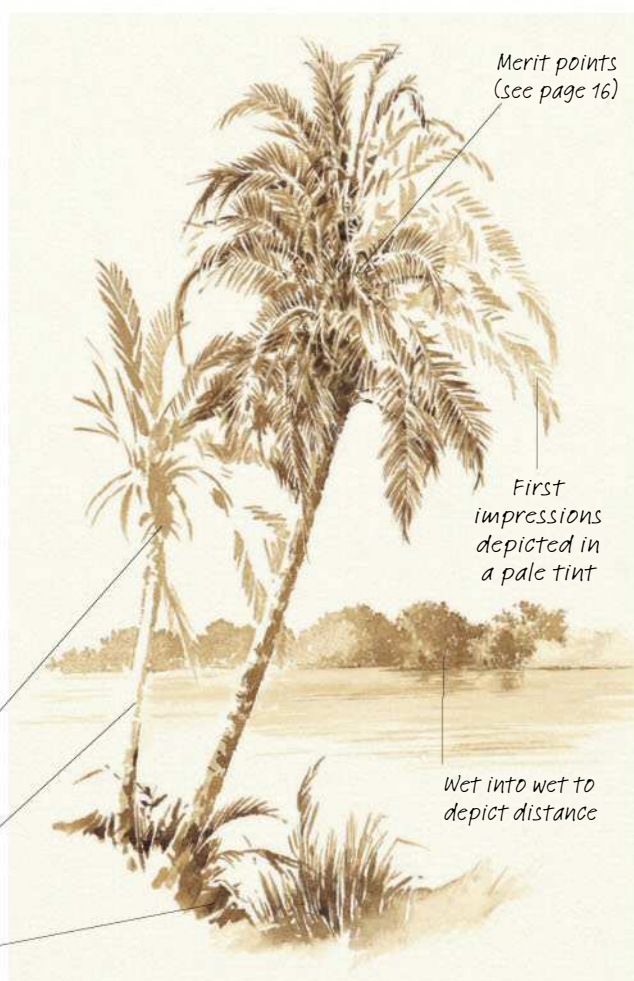
Pleasant textures created by using pencil on tinted watercolour paper

Strong contrasts seen in reflections on disturbed surface

Variety of texture and tone

Wet on dry and wet into wet

Wet into wet (see page 22) is ideal for depicting distance, and works well with wet on dry, which gives crisp foreground shapes. Both methods are combined in this study of palm trees. I used the same mix as for the stonework on the opposite page – sepia and raw umber – but with a different ratio: raw umber is the predominant colour in this mix, producing a pleasant monochrome colour that matches the tranquillity of the waterside scene.



*Merit points
(see page 16)*

*First
impressions
depicted in
a pale tint*

*Wet into wet to
depict distance*

Look for tonal shapes upon which to build

Leave light areas as white paper

*Wet on dry in foreground to
produce crisp contrasts*

Colour

Colour in your paintings will help you express mood and atmosphere, and the mixing of colours should be a considered activity, rather than a random one.

Your choice of colours, and how many you consider necessary for use in a particular painting, will benefit from acquired knowledge and understanding of colour. The best way to gain both of these is through exercises and experimentation, and, like any learning experience, this can be enhanced if there is an element of fun.

Colour wheels

The basic colour wheel contains the three primary colours – red, blue and yellow – with their secondaries of purple, green and orange. The tonal colour wheel above far right demonstrates a gradation towards the central area to show the relationship of the paler hues.

Balloon into colour!

Because there are no reds, blues or yellows that are actually primary – instead, there are warm and cool reds, blues and yellows – I have created a colour balloon to help you understand the differences.



Basic colour wheel



Tonal colour wheel

The top area of the balloon contains the cool primaries and their secondaries, while the lower part consists of the warmer hues. Imagine that there is cool air above the balloon (cool colours) and a warm rush of air from the flames beneath (warm colours).

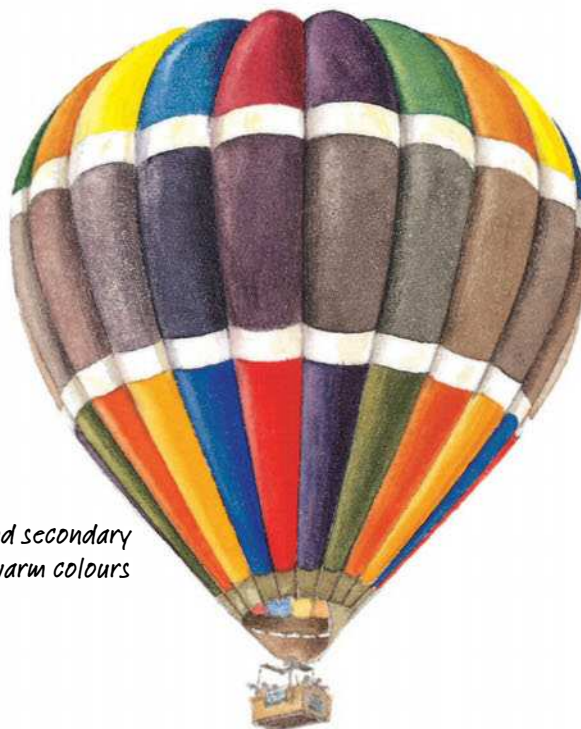
The area in between shows some useful neutral hues, obtained by mixing the primaries together in different proportions. The neutrals are applied in a way that introduces an impression of subtle texture, and the highlights and shadows add interest.

Groups of warm and cool primary colours, in the form of balloons on either side of the main image, relate the hues to those in the main balloon.

Primary cool colours



Primary and secondary cool colours



Primary and secondary warm colours

Primary warm colours



Choosing a Palette of Colours

You may feel the process of choosing a suitable palette from the vast range of colours available to be rather daunting. If so, start by working with a limited palette, which will encourage you to be more resourceful.

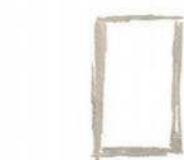
Limited palette

The challenge of working with a limited palette gives you an opportunity to discover colour permutations that might otherwise remain unknown to you. Restricting your palette to three, or even two, colours can encourage you to produce some exciting results.

Below, a monochrome interpretation of a window in an old building shows how a mix of raw sienna and French ultramarine produces a useful hue that is ideal for depicting this type of subject matter.

By introducing a third colour, you will discover a very pleasing range with which to work. I use these three colours initially in the form of a controlled exercise and then demonstrate how they work within a little study of a church. The white paper also plays an important part for much of the main image, with the neutral hue enhancing the shadow areas.

Simple colour-mixing exercise



Without drawing image first, lay supporting lines directly onto paper with brush



Add further structure lines



Build around structure in layered washes, and add rich tones within shadow areas using full range of tones

Controlled colour-mixing exercise

Controlled shapes showing colour permutations

Burnt sienna

Useful neutral hue

French ultramarine



Finish the strips after changing the position of the two colours

Colour ribbon



A palette of only two colours can produce a range of hues. Add a third, and you will discover endless opportunities to create exciting hues. Try blending the colours in a controlled way to experiment with abstract shapes, as well as the more straightforward approach to colour mixing on page 42.

Three-colour painting

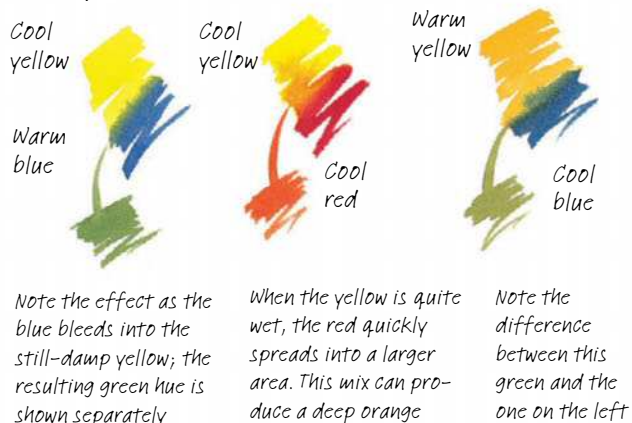


The colours used here are those in the colour ribbon, showing that a painting of rich colours can be developed from a very few hues.

Colour Mixing

There are numerous ways in which colour mixing may be practised, and you can easily make reference charts. Sometimes, however, it is fun to work with a more flexible approach, which is demonstrated here with a set of two-colour mixes.

Primary mixes



Going for greens

Beginners often experience problems when mixing greens, but you can have fun creating a range, as shown here.

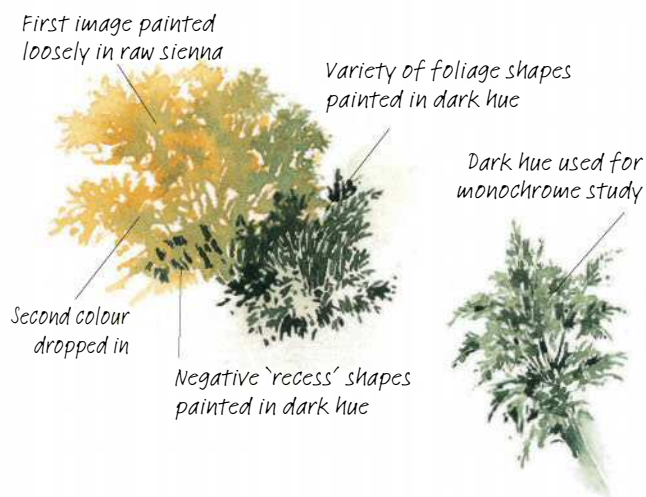
Mix a little raw sienna with a cool blue and paint a swirl of the resulting green upon your paper. Then add a little more raw sienna to the palette and place another swirl. Then a little more, and so on, until you finally reach a swirl of pure raw sienna again. Do the same with the blue, and note how many different greens you have been able to create with just two colours.



Mixing colours on paper

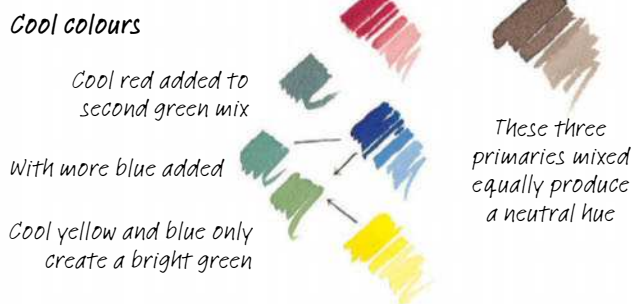
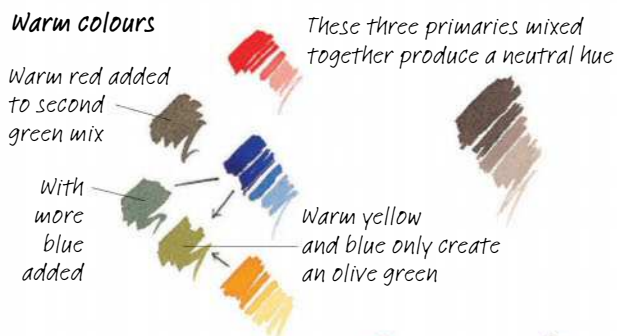
Colours also mix well on paper (see page 22), so try this little exercise with the raw sienna and cool blue hues. Create a foliage mass image on the paper using

pure raw sienna. Drop in one of the greens you have already mixed, and watch it spread. When this has dried, mix a dark hue by increasing the proportion of blue in your palette, and paint within the negative recess shapes as well as a freely interpreted foliage mass at the side. Note the exciting contrasts. This dark hue is also very effective used as a monochrome study.



Warm and cool colours

You have seen how warm and cool colours may be mixed with each other. These two examples show some of the different greens that can be achieved by mixing only warm colours with warm, and cool colours with cool. Remember to keep your colours pure, and for these exercises, use no more than three colours in any mix.



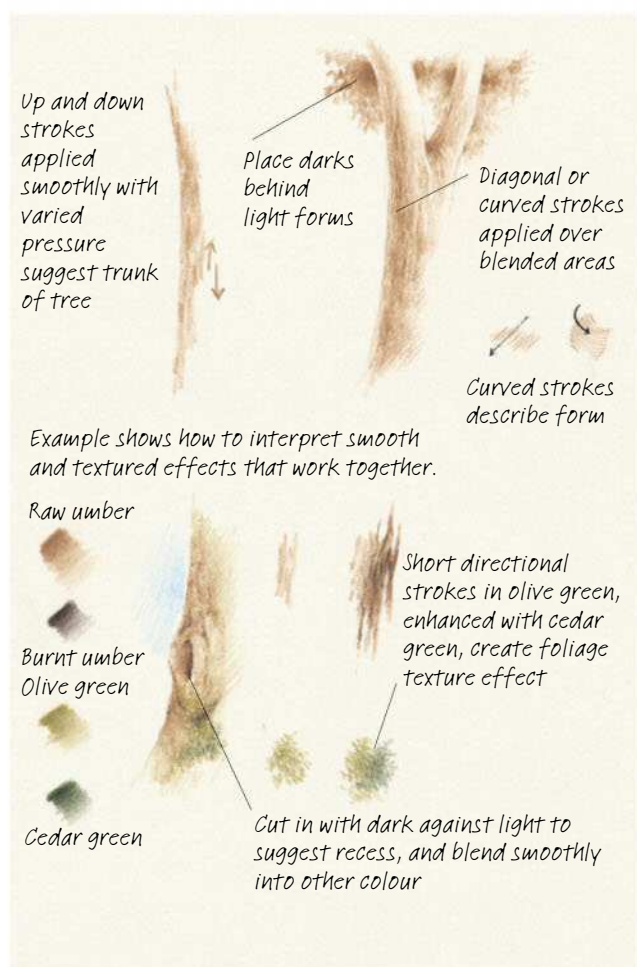
Blending Dry Media

Whether blending dry pigment smoothly into the paper's surface or into another previously applied colour, you will need to decide upon the direction of your strokes.

This can be easily achieved by paying regard to the subject matter. Alternatively, you may decide to use diagonal or vertically applied strokes throughout the application, or other permutations of strokes.

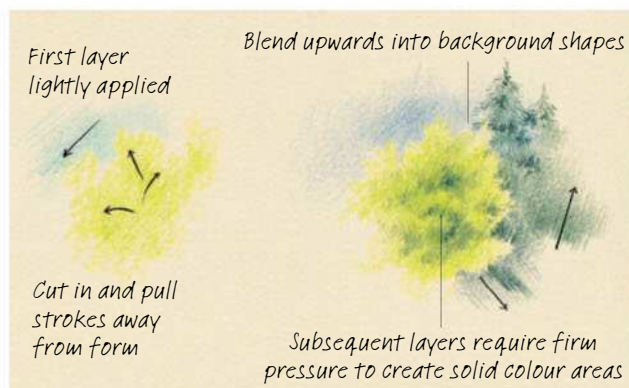
Smooth blending

Here, coloured pencils are used to demonstrate smooth blending on a smooth paper surface to depict the bark of a tree. Practise in monochrome first, and experiment with pencil pressure to achieve rich darks, contrasting these with light areas to create a three-dimensional effect. Subsequent diagonal or curved directional strokes can be superimposed over the evenly blended areas if desired.



Smooth blending on a textured surface

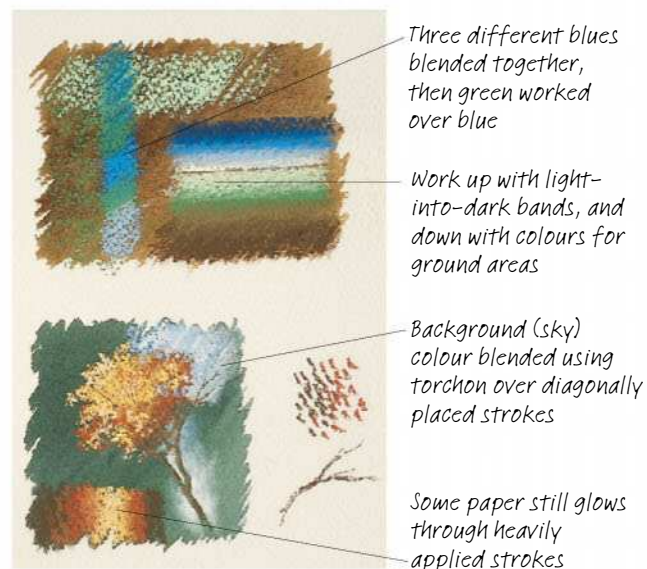
Artists' pencils can be successfully worked on textured paper. The texture of the paper can be retained if the pencil pressure is light – more heavily applied, the pigment will produce a smooth sheen on the surface, enabling a sharpened pencil to create dark areas of hue and tone. Cut in crisply at edges to achieve contrasts.



Blending dry mediums

If you enjoy working with rich hues on a heavily textured surface, apply a coloured watercolour ground to a rough paper such as Saunders Waterford 600gsm (300lb), and allow it to dry: it can then be used as a support for soft pastels.

Experiment with the two methods shown here, layering the pastels over each other and using a torchon, a stick of tightly rolled paper in the shape of a pencil.



Aerial Perspective

One of the problems often experienced by beginners in landscape paintings is that of avoiding the depiction of aerial perspective in situations where it is not intended. Knowing that a pond is round when viewed from above, they endeavour to show this as much as possible, even when, from the angle they view it when standing on the ground, the shape they actually see is totally different, and features nothing that suggests roundness.

Seen from above

For this reason two different interpretations of aerial perspective are shown here, to illustrate how much (and how little) we are able to see certain objects and features when viewed from above.

Seen from a plane, as below, the countryside shows buildings at a perspective angle that is very similar to those that are observed when standing on a cliff top

and looking down at the roof tops of seaside houses built against the cliff.

Viewing a wide river and skyscrapers from above will give you an idea of extreme distance, with the landscape stretching as far as the eye can see.

Rural patterns

Fields and pastures resemble the appearance of a patchwork quilt, with each area offering different colours, textures and tonal variations, the latter quite often affected by cloud formations. Well-grazed fields often have a mottled appearance, whereas ploughed fields contain linear patterns. Lush green pastures appear as a more uniform rich green. Each area, surrounded by borders of hedge or fence and interspersed with occasional groups of houses, gives the appearance of ordered tranquillity.

Aerial study built up slowly with layers of wash, rather than mixing dark colours initially

Effect of ploughed field achieved by dragging spread, pigmented brush hairs (see p 23) in direction of furrows

Well-grazed field depicted by slight stippling of green wash over an already dry wash of earth colour

Lush green fields represented with overlaid washes of green. Laying washes wet on dry gives control of colour intensity

Ruts in grassy pasture painted using on/off pressure (tacking stitch) method, with brush held in 'on-your-toes' position

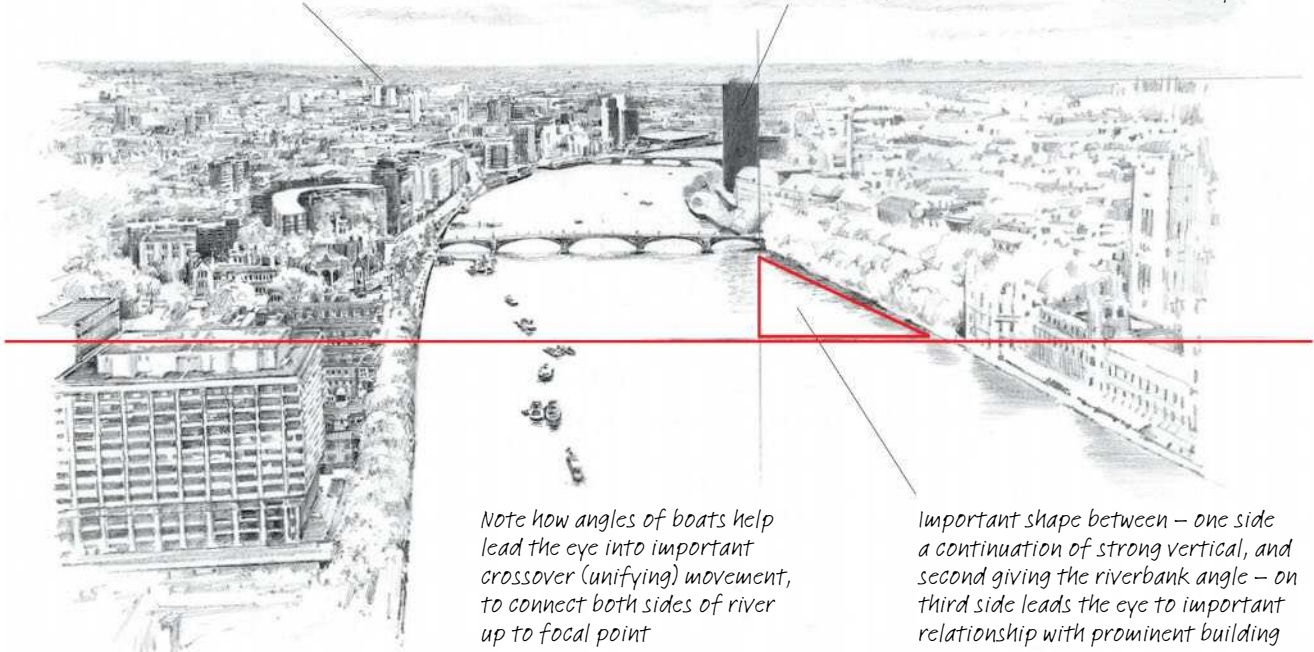
Urban patterns

City and town patterns consist mainly of horizontal and vertical forms arranged in close proximity. Although these may be broken in places by areas of parkland and massed tree formations, the effect often

relies upon a wide river to provide an area within the composition that rests the eye. The placing of bridges will help retain unity within the picture, and cloud formations in the sky can be used to soften what may otherwise appear a very angular scene.

For distant areas pencil pressure needs to be as gentle as possible for first strokes to maintain control of intensity

Tower block focal point provides strongest vertical guideline (see page 16), from where horizontal and vertical reference lines relate to rest of composition



Close observation, patience and practice help control marks in complex areas

Note how angles of boats help lead the eye into important crossover (unifying) movement, to connect both sides of river up to focal point

Important shape between – one side a continuation of strong vertical, and second giving the riverbank angle – on third side leads the eye to important relationship with prominent building

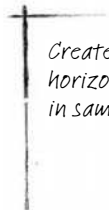
Pencil exercises

To achieve an accurate, controlled line

Place short stroke first, going back over it, working over it again and continuing beyond



Create horizontal line in same way



Series of parallel lines

Place short, continuous application line then others parallel to it and contoured edges



Sharp pencil moved up and down before the main downward line creates darker tone



Leaving gaps

This series of curved edge lines started as continuously placed parallels. A gap was left and the lines were applied with shorter strokes to increase the gap size.



Complex patterns

More complex shapes suggest walls, windows, bridges and so on



Working Outdoors

Using photographs

The best way to use photographs successfully is alongside, and as a back-up for, sketchbook work. There is a spontaneity in drawing from life that is lost in a direct copy from a photograph, yet photographic reference can be a great support for your artwork. It captures the mood of the moment, immobilises movement (especially helpful with water) to allow you to analyse shapes and forms, and gives you the opportunity to capture a scene quickly if your time is short or the weather conditions doubtful. It also enables you to compose the scene through the lens and swiftly record it from a variety of viewpoints. Written notes alongside your drawings can then be made in haste or at leisure, and colour notes all form a reference library that is unique to you.

Sketchbook work

Draw with sincerity – with a deep desire to put on to paper not just what you think you see, but what you feel about what you see. It is not as difficult as it sounds.

When you start the first marks, do not be concerned about how they will look on paper. Start by observing the subject – really look at it. Absorb it, both the subject(s) and the surroundings. Note relationships, perspective, scale, textures and so on. This is your ‘thinking time’, and is an invaluable part of any work of art.

Ask yourself why you have chosen this subject in the first place – you will be spending your valuable time

working to portray it on paper, so what attracts you to it? This will help you understand where to put emphasis in your portrayal of the view, object(s) or whatever, and by doing this you will be starting to make it unique to you.

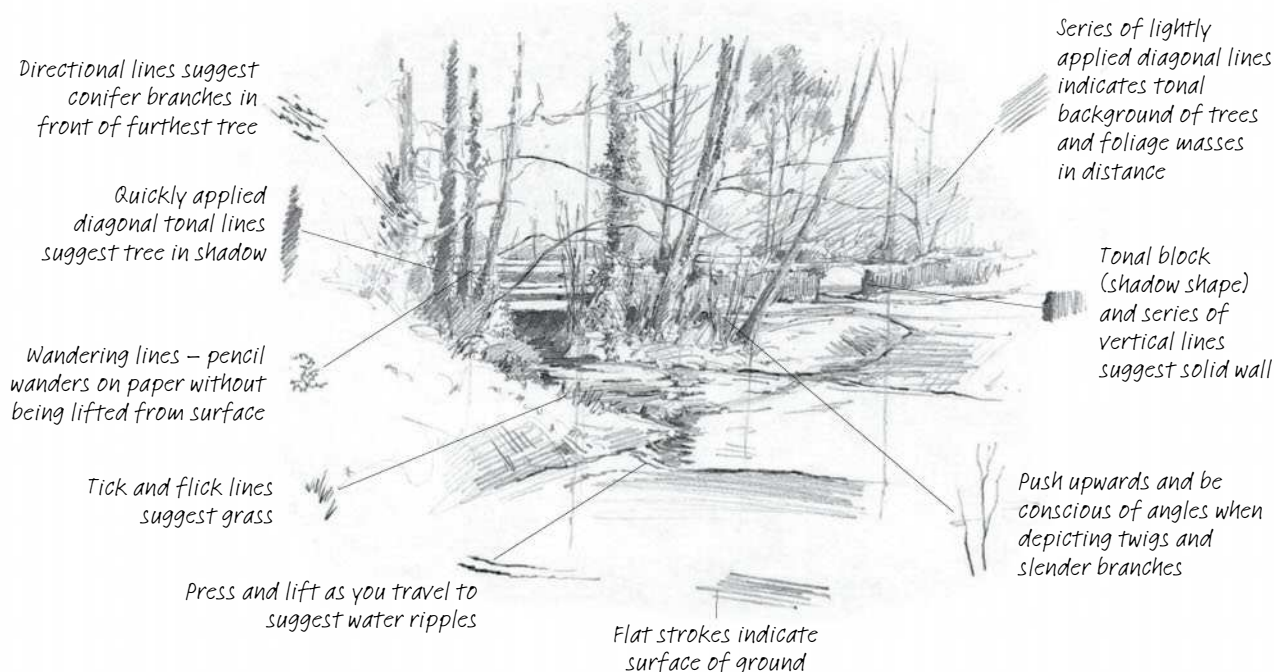
Using photographs and sketchbooks

A photograph, being a record of what is in front of you at the time you take the picture, is just that – a record. A sketch, or more detailed drawing, however, may contain areas where you have decided to look and record far more closely – or areas that you have chosen to simplify or even leave entirely untouched. Wherever possible, if you intend to work from your sketches at a later date, do take a series of photographs to enhance your memory, but try not to rely solely upon these.

Fill your sketchbook in every conceivable way, with small studies, larger impressions, experimental marks, detailed observations, quick movements using a variety of tools – anything. It will become the way you see and feel about your surroundings and will influence your finished artwork in an exciting and unique way.

Learn your lines

In a ‘working’ sketch – one from which you will later work – a pencil can be used freely, with wandering lines travelling loosely over the paper with light pressure, heavier pressure for shadow lines, diagonally applied lines to suggest tonal blocks, and so on.



Using the photograph

This more detailed sketch demonstrates how the back-up photograph – taken at the same time as the working sketch opposite was made – is referred to at the same time as the initial sketch to develop a pictorial composition from the scene. The artist composes a pic-

ture, which is a very different process from copying a photograph (see page 34–35).

The watercolour interpretation of this second sketch demonstrates how the first tonal washes were applied and, in the same areas, progresses to adding richer hues and tones.



Some areas interpreted purely as silhouettes

Rich darks for shadow recesses

Merit point (see page 16) shadow recess – negative shape

Rapidly applied directional strokes suggest flowing water

Diagonal toning suggests shadow areas

Wet into wet (see page 22)

Dark silhouettes simplify shapes

Rich darks (negative shapes) encourage light forms to stand forward

Drop in darkest tones by picking up richer pigment and touching damp areas behind light forms

Banks of foliage built using freely applied short strokes, producing tonal shapes and individual foliage strokes

While area is still damp, gently touch in medium tones to allow bleeding

Very similar movements to tick and flick pencil strokes to establish shapes for grassy bank

Sweep strokes of pale washes

Short directional massed strokes in pale hue used as base coat for grass bank. Retain some areas of white paper for highlighted grasses later

Skies and Clouds

Drawing Exercises

The direction in which you apply any pencil stroke requires careful consideration. Successful images often require a certain amount of hand, arm and body movement – especially when directing contours and angles.

The exercises on these pages are designed to encourage the flexibility of your wrist, and it is helpful to practise them using as many directions as possible in order to loosen yourself up.

4B pencil



Contoured tonal blocks



Create a curve using individual strokes



Mass strokes gently to form a contoured shape



Practise movement of hand and arm and analyse directions with firm strokes



Open strokes and give thought to their application



Close strokes and practise contoured shapes in other directions

CHOOSING CONTOUR MARKS

Contour lines, whether broken or continuous, need consistency if they are to achieve accurate representation. The marks you make may be gently toned or firmly placed, but you do need to be in control of them and be aware beforehand of your intended impression.

Practice exercises, approaching the depiction of contour marks from different directions, are essential for developing personal skills.



Long and short contour strokes with even pressure



Contour stroke lines achieved with a series of dashes and on/off pressure



Toned contour shape and light tone overlay using firm pressure with light pressure for overlay



Work outwards from dark-toned central block



Introduce tone within contour shape



Leave light edges to pale-toned contour shapes

Pen and ink

Stippling, although time-consuming, can be very rewarding when a stippled image is complete and viewed as a whole. With the pen held vertically

Stippling

Place a series of dots holding pen vertical to paper

Mass dots in areas where more tone is required

Contoured dots

against the paper, place each pressure dot individually and clearly. Do not be tempted to rush, or you will spoil the effect. If you tire during the process, just place your work to one side and return to it later.

Dots into dashes

Place a series of dot/dash contour lines

Curve contour 'lines' into recognizable shapes

Watercolour pencils

Monochrome images, which rely on tonal application and variation, are very effective for depicting skies, and are easily achieved by the use of varied pressure.

Working from the negative shape or sky seen between cloud formations

The important thing to remember is that you need to gain an understanding of the subject in order to know where to place pencil pressure and where to leave white paper.

Gentle toning defines edge of cloud

Arrows indicate direction of strokes to work out into contoured edges of clouds

Medium charcoal pencil

A medium charcoal pencil is useful for quick studies of clouds, giving more depth of tone than a light pencil and being better for delicate areas than a dark pencil.

Diagonally applied strokes for sky

Retain areas of white paper

Single stroke with on/off pressure – strokes horizontally applied to create effect of receding clouds

Curved strokes on shadow sides of clouds

Watercolour exercises

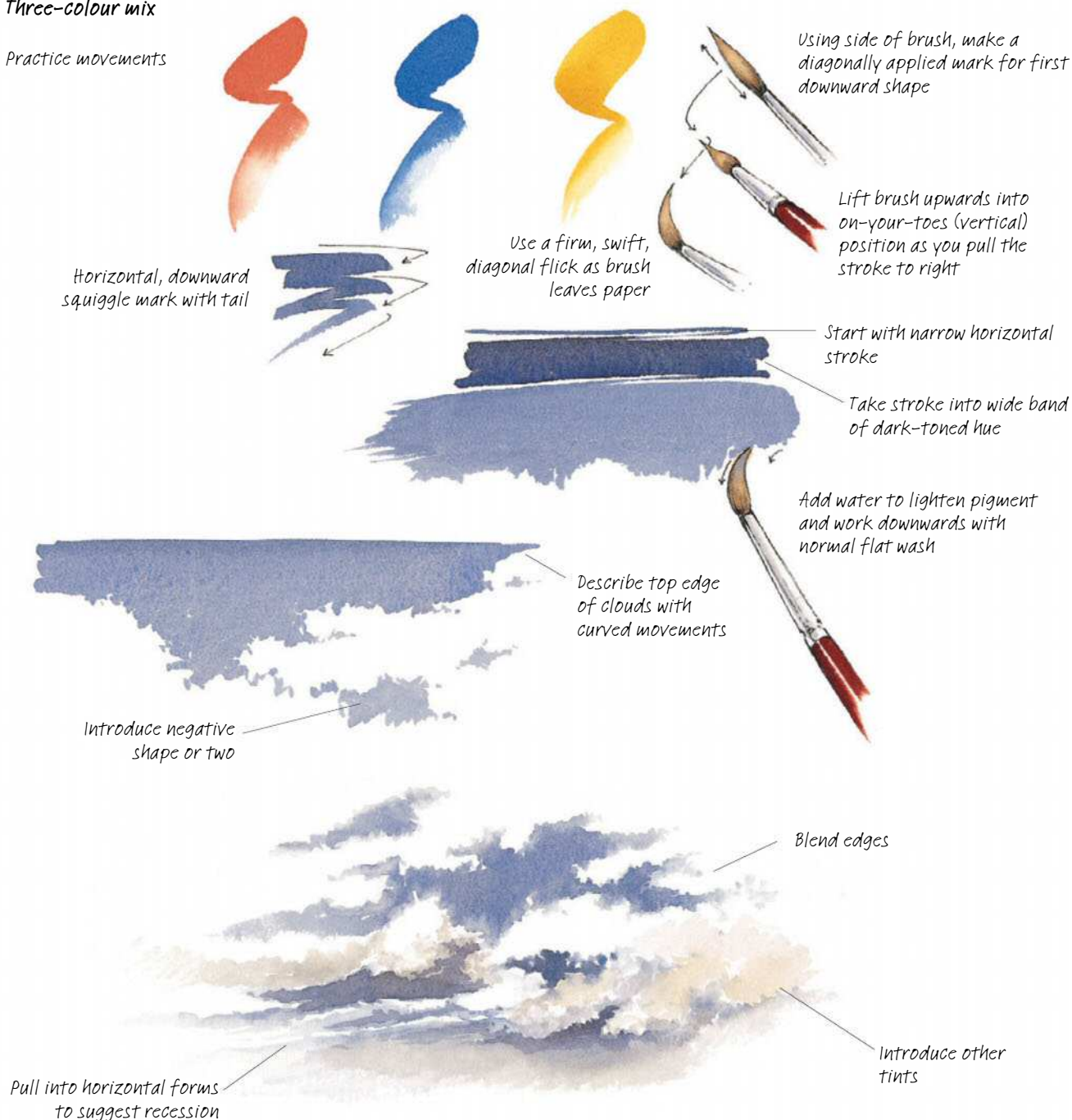
In the same way that you need to consider contours in ink and pencils, it is by depicting contours with the sweep of a brushstroke that cloud images appear. This is an occasion when the concept, 'It is not just what you paint in that is important, but

also the areas you choose to leave out!' should be your guiding principle.

These exercises are intended to help you understand how to observe and depict cloud formations before treating them in a style that is personal to you.

Three-colour mix

Practice movements

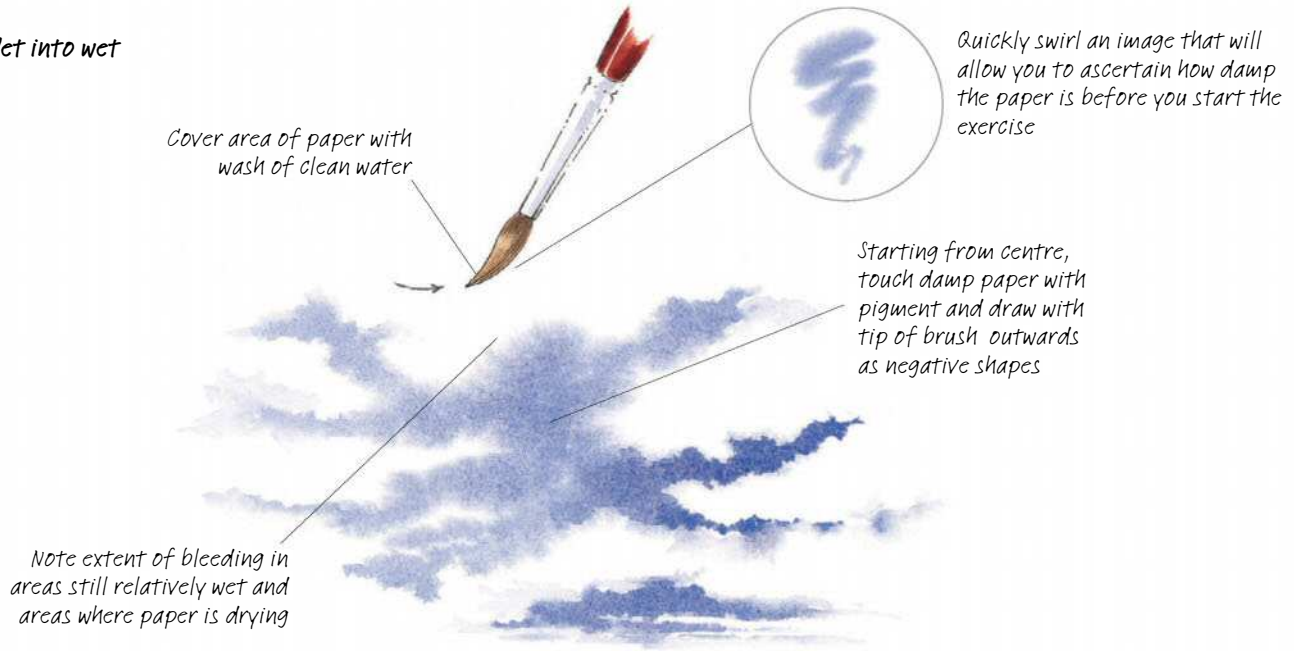


Three different approaches

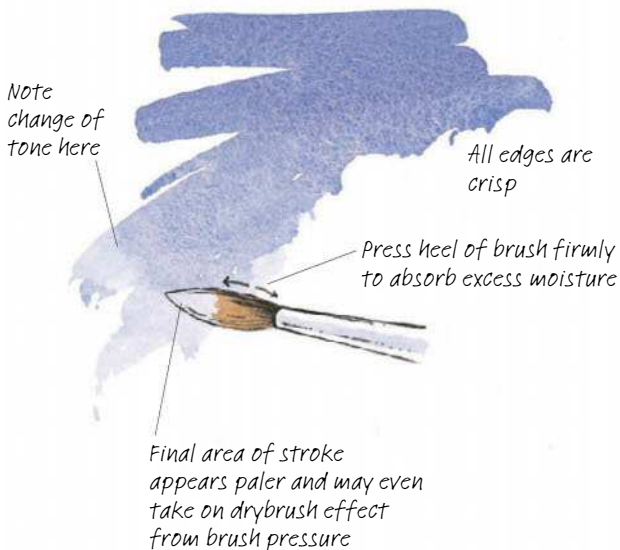
On this page are three methods for you to experiment with as you familiarize yourself with this fascinating

subject. Using the same colour mix as on the opposite page, paint in monochrome for these exercises.

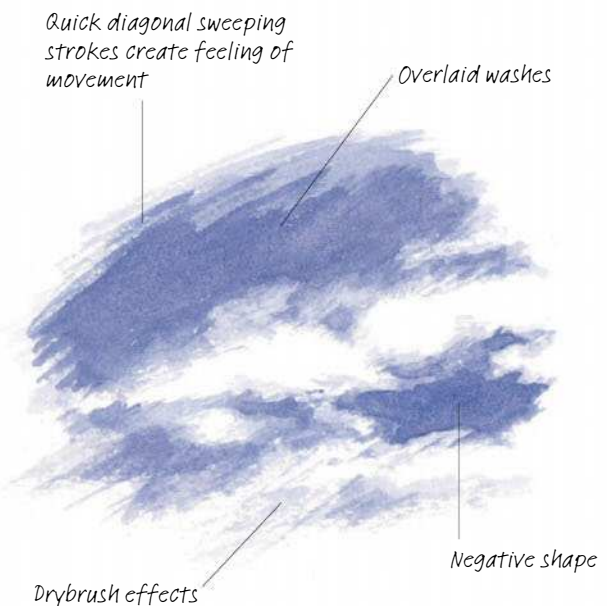
Wet into wet



Wet on dry



Fast and free



Cloud Formations: Typical Problems

Cloud formations are so diverse, and the colours found within skies are so varied that your choice of representation is limitless. Skies portray moods and atmospheres with an exciting range of tonal variations. They can be tranquil or full of movement, and it can help to consider their depiction through directional strokes – whether in pencil or brush – with cloud contours against a flat area of blue.

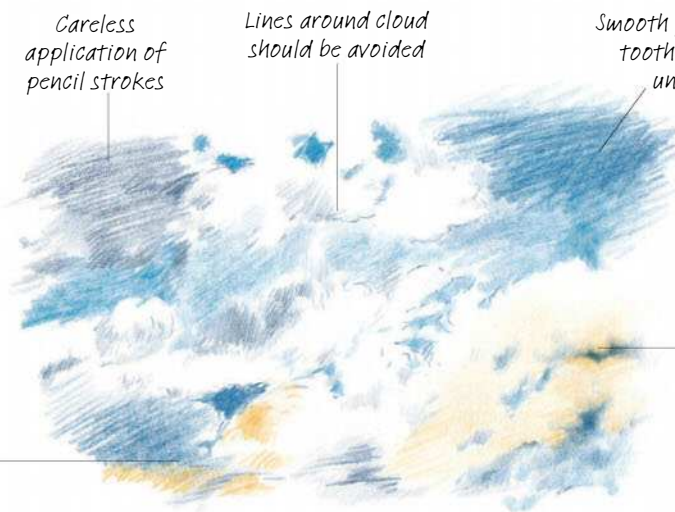
Careless application of pencil strokes

Lines around cloud should be avoided

Smooth paper has so little tooth that pencil leaves unintentional marks

Overlaid hues can change into unanticipated colour

Application of different areas of colour suggests lack of understanding of cloud formations



Tonal drawing

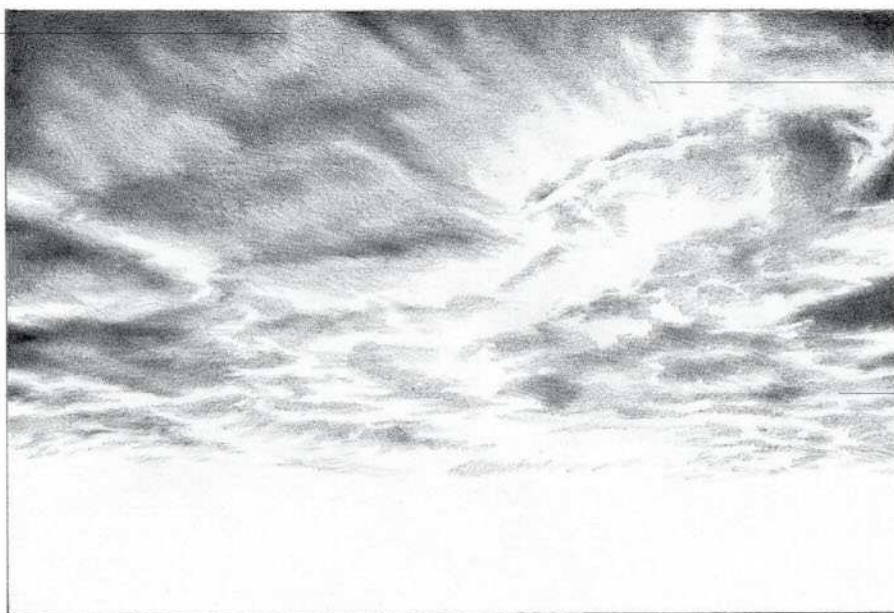
Start with a straightforward tonal drawing, choosing a sky that gives the opportunity to shade from the

darkest to the lightest tones (white paper) with the use of subtle blending of one tone into, and against, the other.

Vary the tones within the dark area

Suggest rays of light by leaving white paper

Create variety of tonal shapes



TRYING YOUR TONES

Starting with diagonal strokes, practise gentle blending, then use crosshatching and strokes that follow the contours of clouds.

2B pencil

Start with simple diagonal stroke tonal block

Eraser taken through pencilwork to remove mistakes easily

Crosshatching

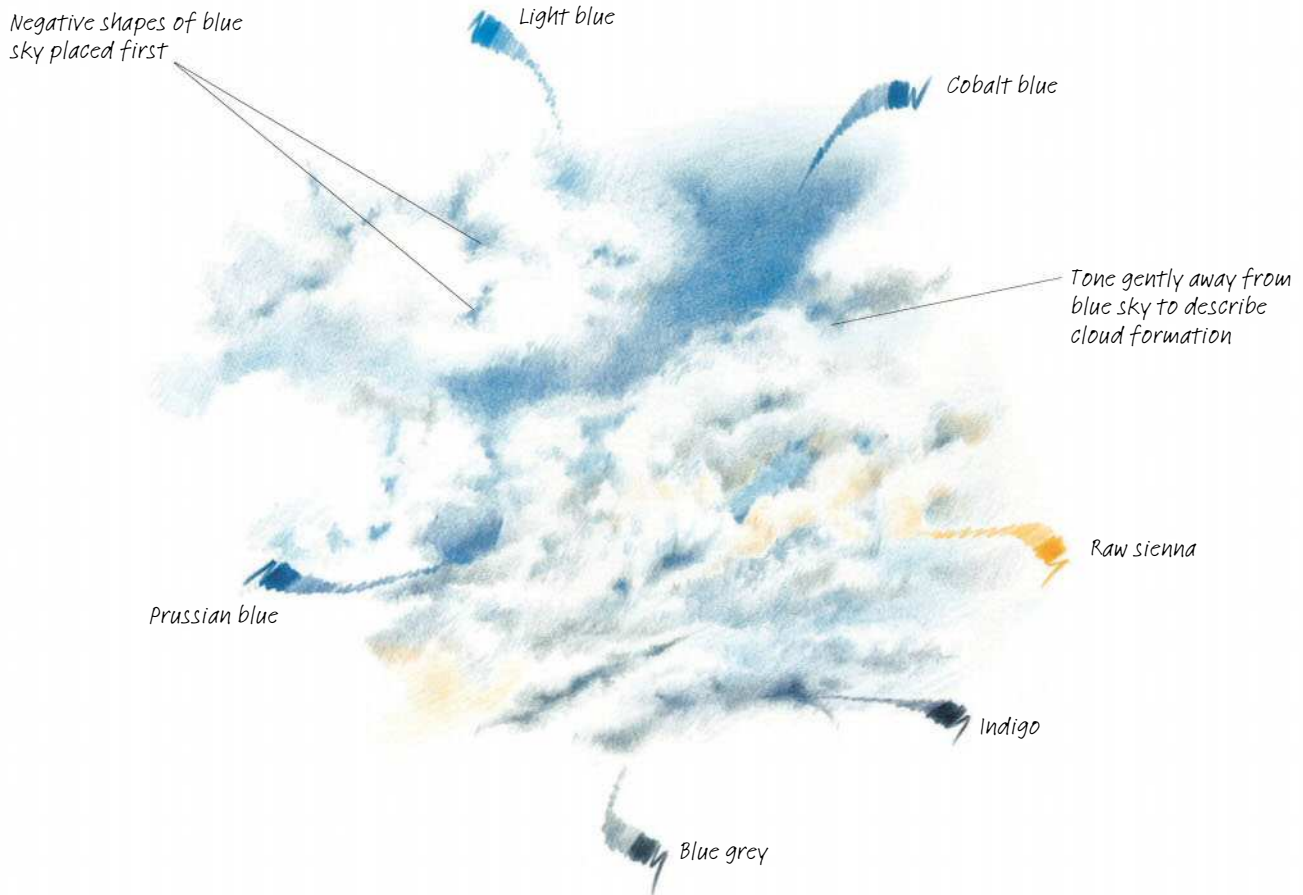


Contour strokes

Solutions

Remember that clouds float in front of the blue beyond. On this illustration, made with Derwent Studio pencils, I placed the blue negative shapes

in position first, before contouring the clouds with shadow areas and leaving the lightest areas in front of everything else.



Colours

Select your colours and use each in turn as a practice exercise in order to familiarize yourself with the pencil and the response of the paper to its application,

as you vary your pressure upon the coloured strip. This is an excellent opportunity for you to loosen up and create tonal contours and masses with a variety of strokes.

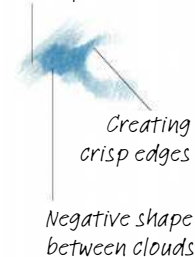
Light blue

Diagonal gradated toning



Cobalt blue

Overlay



Prussian blue



Curves and contours

Blue grey



Variety of small shapes

Raw sienna



Area of crosshatching

Indigo



Linear contrasts

Mood and Atmosphere: Typical Problems

Skies have many changes of mood; I have illustrated two contrasting atmospheres on this spread to help you understand different treatments of the subject. They both rely on the effect of light. On this page you can see how a tranquil sky, viewed at the end of the day, shows strong light behind the horizon, adding a warm glow. On the opposite page the cold light of a stormy sky gives the impression of movement and turbulence.

Thoughts on paper

One of the problems faced by beginners is how to avoid giving a completely flat impression of a sky when cloud formations should be suggesting a third dimension. This division of foreground, middle



Not enough thought and control given to wet-into-wet method



Unconsidered approach

ground and distance shows the effect created when the largest clouds appear directly above in the foreground, and similar formations appear to recede as they pass into the distance.

Diagonal toning indicates flat area of sky

Foreground

Middle distance

Distance

More distant cloud formations should have closer stroke lines

Three-dimensional feeling indicated by contours in diagrammatic use of dotted lines

One area of cloud formation is in front of other and is largest

If further clouds were closer they would appear as massive and three-dimensional as those above

Combination sky

Dark silhouette of ground treated as simple, dark, flat wash area



Horizontally placed gradated wash

Treatment follows form of cloud strip

Flat wash

Solutions

In order to create a strong sense of atmosphere, you need to introduce stronger contrasts, both of texture and of tone/colour. The smooth washes in the nega-

tive shapes of a darkened sky make a striking contrast with the bright, light edges of fluffy clouds as they move swiftly across the dramatic sky.



Leave light edges

Negative shape

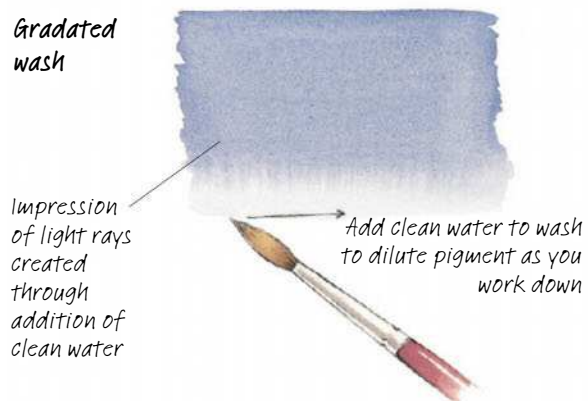
Flatten images of distant clouds to make them recede, using horizontally applied strokes

Look for shadow recess shapes within cloud formation

Gradation

Practise gradated washes, both for colour and tonal variation. The effect of clean water added at the base can create impressions of filtered light in the sky.

Gradated wash



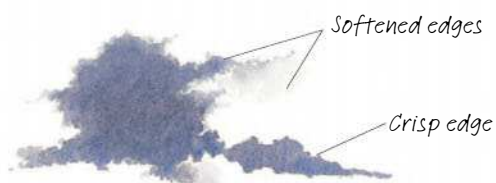
Impression of light rays created through addition of clean water

Add clean water to wash to dilute pigment as you work down

Practice exercises



Paint a negative sky shape



Softened edges

Crisp edge

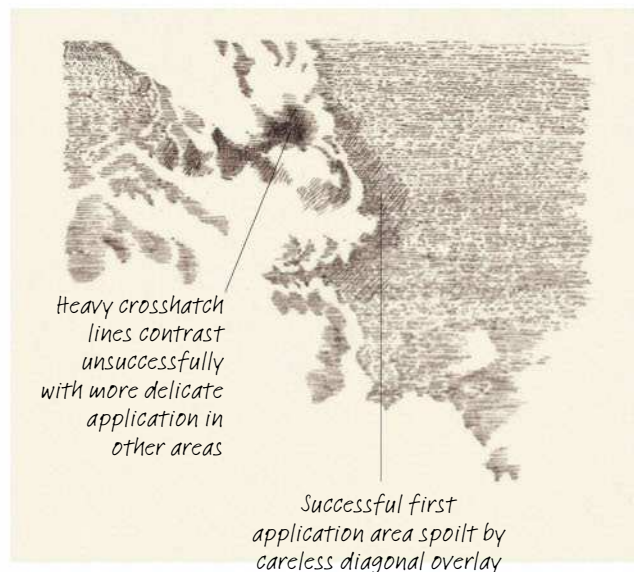
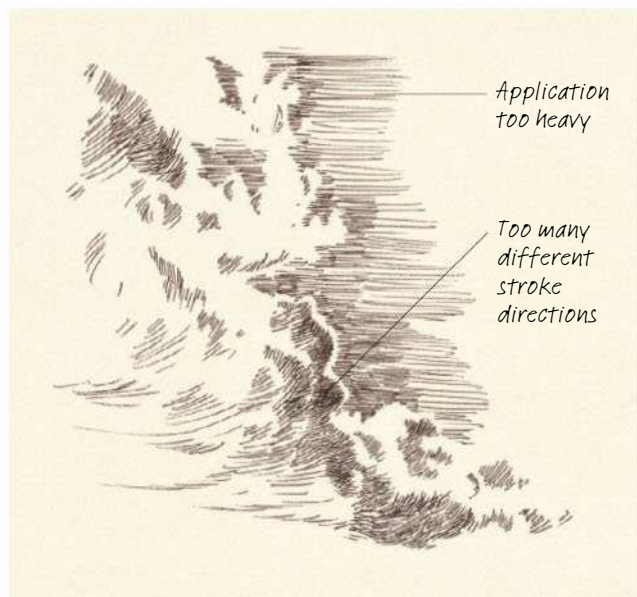
Before image has dried, soften some edges using clean water on brush

Tighter Approach: Typical Problems

Cloud formations lend themselves to depiction in paint, pastel, charcoal, pencil and a loose application in pen and ink, but when considering a tighter, more detailed approach using the latter, problems can occur.

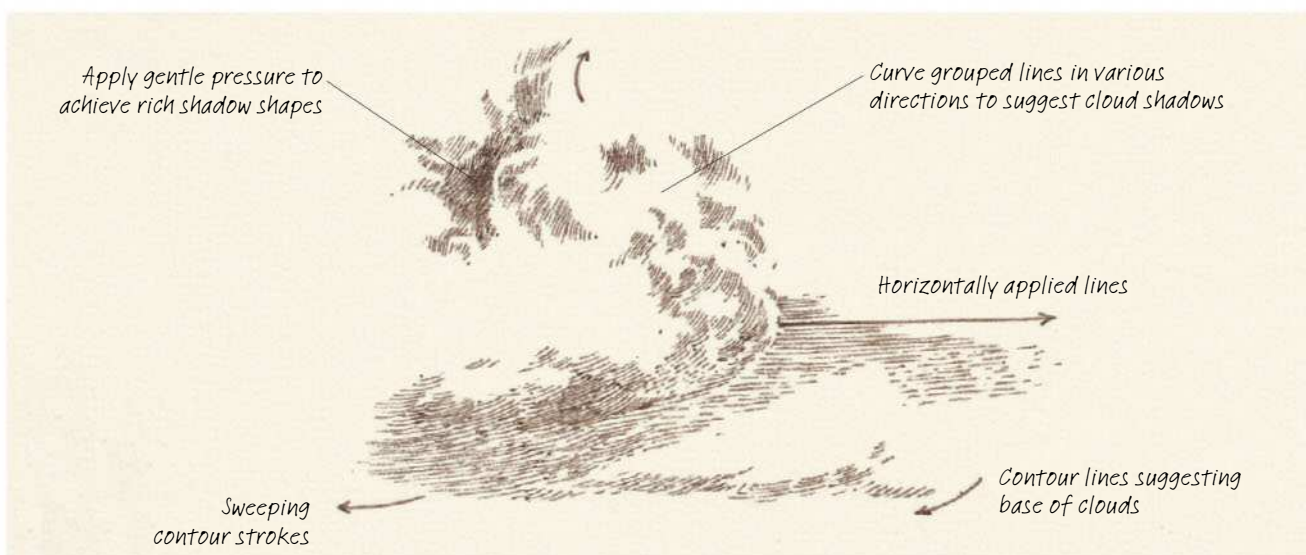
Working with pen and ink, various methods can be practised as warm-up exercises, where it is not only

the type of pen and the way it is used that is important, but also the paper upon which we choose to work. Some methods, where the ink is lightly grazed across the surface in order to achieve certain effects, may require a slightly textured surface – a paper that has tooth. This method requires practice to be successful, however.



Let your strokes follow the form you see – whether it be horizontal application to suggest flat sky areas or curved strokes following the forms of clouds. Practise

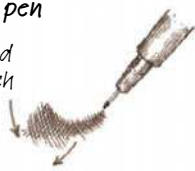
contoured lines and on/off pressure parallel lines, as well as crosshatching, on different paper surfaces to find out what works best for you.



Solutions

Artist's pen

Contoured
crosshatch



Crosshatch



Solid
pigment
Contour

Basic
vertical
dot/dash
line



Lift pen from paper while
continuing movement
and before reapplying to
complete stroke

Graze surface for effect

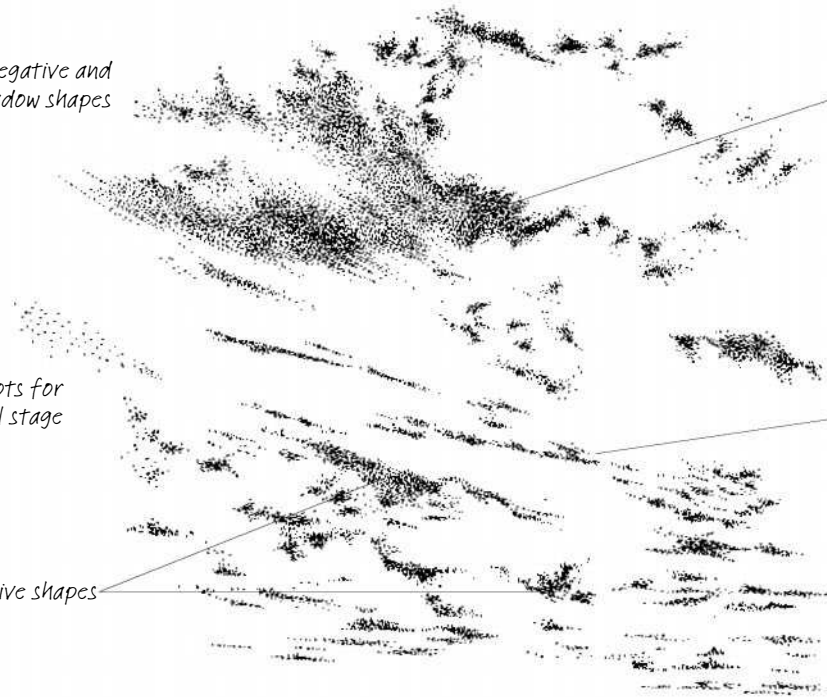
Stippled negative and
shadow shapes

Massed dots for
darkest tonal areas

Spaced dots for
initial stage

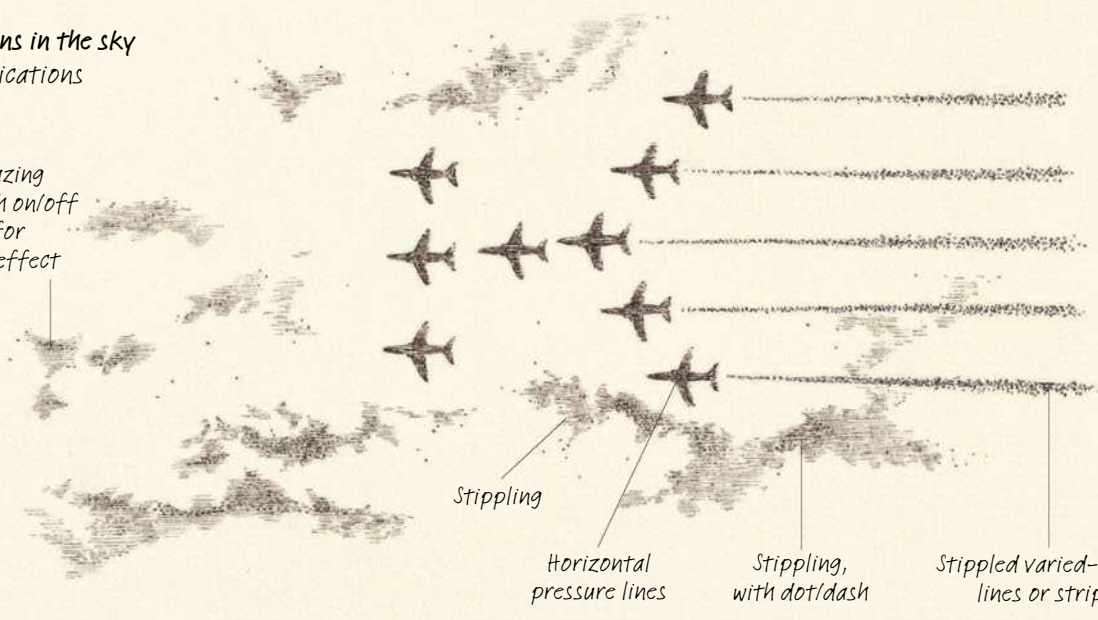
Directional stippled
diagonal images

Negative shapes



Formations in the sky
Five applications

Gently grazing
paper with on/off
pressure for
dot/dash effect

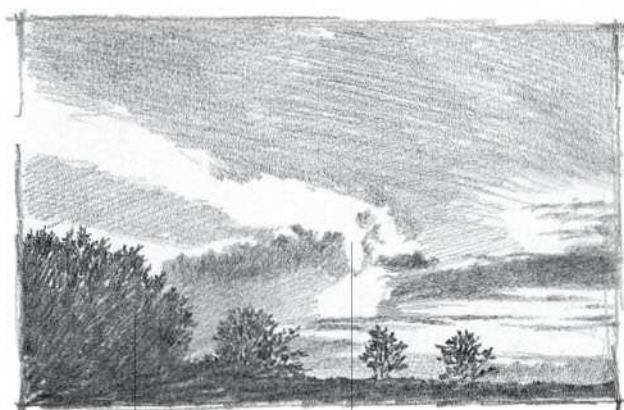


Demonstration: Mixed Sky

A mixed sky of cumulus and cirrus clouds is more interesting to paint when viewed at the end of the day, when there may be brilliant colours and strong tonal contrasts. The foreground silhouettes of trees upon a dark base frame the activity above, and pastels are an ideal medium for this subject.

Planning the composition

If you look through a viewfinder you can position the focal point or point of interest in such a way as to lead the eye into your picture. In the two preliminary sketches, the annotations explain why the sketch below right was chosen as a base from which to work.



Uninteresting large tree silhouette takes up too much foreground

Focal point, main cloud formation, is too central



Large tree gives strength of tone to frame part of foreground

Focal point, main cloud formation, relates to trees in foreground

Shadow clouds help guide eye into picture

PRACTISING STROKES

I keep a supply of old watercolour paper offcuts to use for testing colours or techniques. One of these offcuts was used for practising suitable strokes for the demonstration on these pages. It is a good idea to think your way into

your proposed work in monochrome, and this exercise in charcoal can be regarded as a warm-up. I used a cotton-wool bud to blend the charcoal in a similar way to that used in the pastel painting opposite.

Diagonal strokes towards sun's rays

Push-out movements to describe cloud formation

Pull cotton-wool bud swiftly over charcoal image to blend

Cut in dark against light to bring clouds forward

Horizontal movements for lower clouds

Medium charcoal pencil on watercolour paper

Pastel study

After consideration, I decided to change the shape slightly from my original sketch by elongating the landscape format. As you can see this has the effect

of enhancing the horizontal clouds, enabling them to contrast strongly with the main cloud formation. The pale tint of the pastel board could also be incorporated within the painting if necessary.

Diagonal application of blue and white pastel sticks into yellow

Curved, push-out movements to describe clouds

White pastel pencil detail

Detail drawing in pastel pencil defines narrow clouds over horizontal strokes of pastel sticks



Sharp black pastel pencil depicts delicate tracery of foreground tree silhouettes

Cut in white sky against yellow cloud

Solid block of Indigo pastel stick



Diagonally applied pastel sticks, moving strokes towards the sun's rays

Strong pressure on pastel stick follows the form of the cloud formation

Horizontal pastel pencil strokes using delicate lines

Water

Drawing exercises

These pencil exercise strokes are applied in different ways, using various angles of the pencil. Those on this page are basic marks, made with a soft, 6B pencil, while those opposite develop the basics and use a variety of mediums to produce different effects.

Tonal block



Slurp stroke



Side-to-side varied-pressure strokes

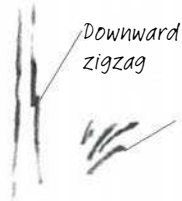


Wide edge of pencil



Narrow edge of pencil

Drop and splash



Downward zigzag

Upward and outward movement

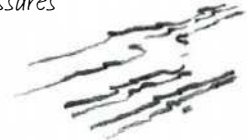
Combination of strokes



Angled on/off-pressure zigzag strokes



Combination of strokes and pressures



Squiggles



Swiftly applied in a downward movement

Combinations



Varied pressure shapes (strokes) – dots and dashes

For this line, some strokes passed back over themselves before continuing, to increase tone

CHOOSING PAPER

The drawing paper used for the majority of the pencil strokes has a surface that, while allowing some rich dark tones to be created, also produces a strong, textured effect when flat areas of tone are applied. You can reduce this by using a smoother surface, for example Bristol board. It is a good idea to experiment with different surfaces in order to discover which surfaces best suit your own particular style and the effects you want to achieve.

Using paper textures



Swift, continuous, side-and-back shaded area enhances texture of paper



Dot-and-dash lines

Single dot-and-dash line



For less texture on same paper surface, gently draw a series of lines



Play with permutations

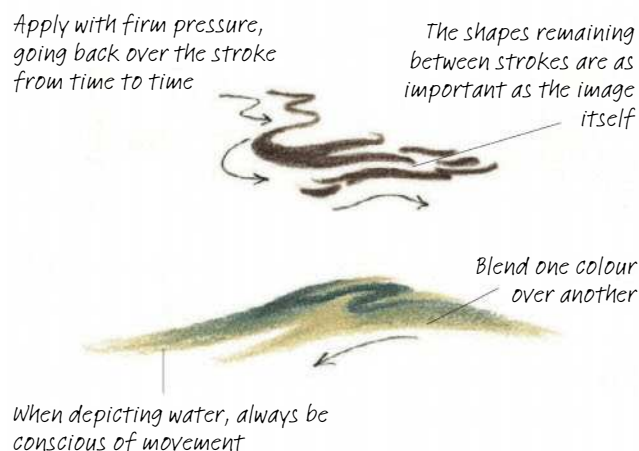
Using Bristol board



For less texture you can also use a smoother-surface paper, which also gives the chance to create different effects.

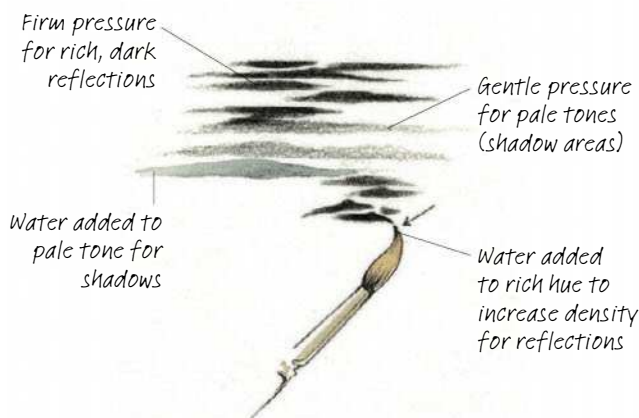
Artists' pencils

This is an ideal medium for creating contours and curves in your drawing, suitable for moving water.

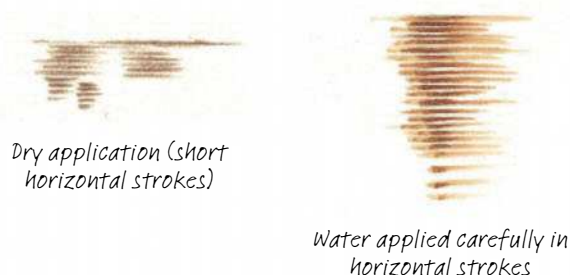


Watercolour pencils

In this exercise, be conscious of the difference between rich, dark reflections on the water's surface and the paler shadows created by undulating ripples.

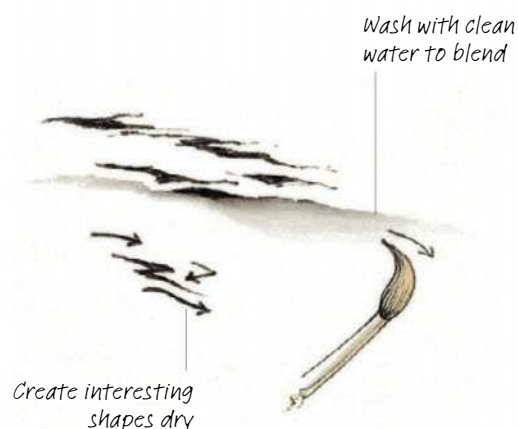


Used dry and then wet as with watersoluble ball pen (see above right), watercolour (or watersoluble) coloured pencils can be used for distant reflections.



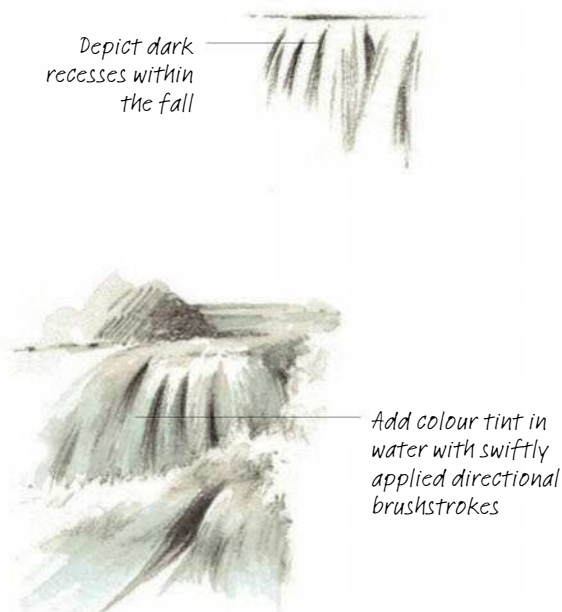
Watersoluble ball pen

Used dry and then wetted with clean water and a brush, this is an ideal medium for creating rich contrasts.



Watersoluble graphite pencil

After making the basic drawing, use a brush and clean water for a monochrome effect that is particularly useful for falling water.



Watercolour exercises

Like the pencil exercises on the previous page, these watercolour exercise strokes are applied in different ways and with different angles of the brush.

Not only do you need to experiment with different pressures and angles of approach as you master these basic strokes, but it is also an idea to vary the surfaces upon which you work. Three different papers were used to demonstrate these brushstroke exercises – Rough, Cold-Pressed (NOT) and Bockingford.

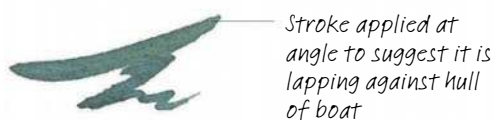
Slurp stroke

This stroke is applied with a loose wrist movement in the direction of the arrows, holding the tool in a normal writing position.

For the side-to-side strokes of varied pressure, concentrate on keeping your brush/pencil stroke direction horizontal as you touch the paper, press as you travel to expand the stroke, and gently lift off, all in a continuous, smooth movement.



Arrows show direction of brush movement



Each stroke may vary in thickness at different points



Side-to-side strokes of varied pressure



Wide and narrow in one stroke

Drop and splash

The quickly applied downward zigzag of the drop and splash stroke is erratic in movement, using uneven pressure on the strokes. You may also travel back over an existing mark/shape to make the image stronger.

Quickly applied uneven zigzag strokes



Quick upward and outward press-and-lift strokes

Be swift and bold in your movement down

Marks are sometimes seen as shapes as well as individual strokes

Mixture of on/off pressure ripple strokes and zigzags



Applied at angle with extreme variations of pressure



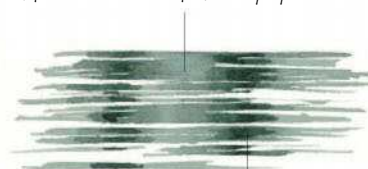
Continuous long stroke

Shorter strokes



Rapid sideways strokes, some single, others turning back on themselves

Apply in medium-to-light tones and with care and consideration for the areas of white paper that remain



Before paint has dried, drop in darker pigment where reflections from images will appear

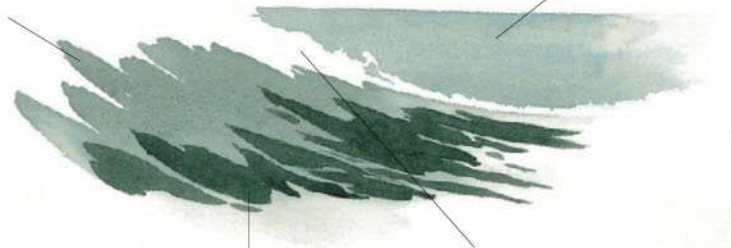
Ocean waves

Similar to the slurp stroke, this one is longer and it produces a more solid effect.



Repeated while wet, strokes merge to form solid area over which other strokes are applied

Contrast flat wash for still waters beyond



Allow base coats to dry before applying varied strokes for shadows and reflections

Leave white paper to suggest foam on top of waves

Flat wash

A flat wash will give you the impression of a glass-like surface on a still lake.



Combination exercise

These exercises show how you can build up these techniques and use them in combination with each other to create different effects.

Varied pressure/stroke line



Sparkling water surface

To achieve the effect of light dancing on water, leave some areas of untouched paper among the continuous on/off dot-and-dash lines.

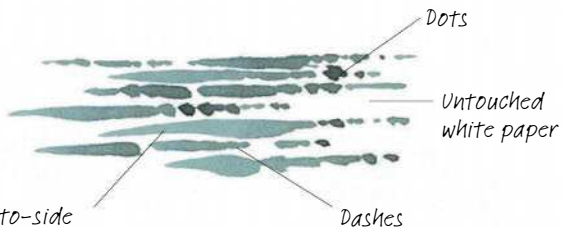


Allow pigment to merge in places



Experiment by washing clean water in and blending out

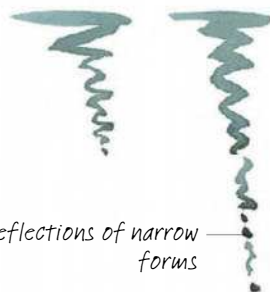
Side-to-side varied-pressure stroke



Squiggles

You can use squiggles to depict reflections in still or moving water, varying the pressure on the brush to give the effect of perspective and distance.

Rapid, downward squiggle stroke



Reflections of narrow forms

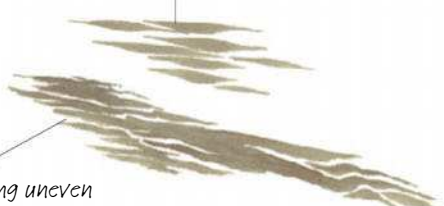
Short, brush-shaped horizontal strokes



Disturbed water surface

Watercolour ripples

Basic ripple (one-stroke) shapes



Practise making uneven small and large contoured shapes, leaving slim areas of white paper exposed

Canal Scene: Typical Problems

Creating contours using a dry medium such as coloured pencils – where varied pressure enhances tonal contrasts – will give you the opportunity to compare the treatment of quite different surfaces.

The solid structures of buildings are so completely different from the elements of water (a colourless, clear liquid), yet in juxtaposition each affects the other. It is possible to see light that has been shed upon water mirrored in the walls adjacent to buildings, and even more obvious are the reflections from buildings upon the surface of the water.



Monochrome pencil study

Compare tonal values by using a monochrome medium, for example a soft drawing pencil, where you may almost 'paint' with the tool by exerting a variety of pressures as it is applied.



Colour notes

Making small (thumbnail) colour sketches of different angles and scenes will help you decide upon a pleasing composition. Practise with a limited palette of colours to prepare for the final interpretation.



Solutions

The reflections of sturdy structures above disturbed water will appear as an assortment of contours and curves. For the early stages of learning, this static, 'caught-in-time' appearance can best be studied by using photographic references to help gain the understanding that will develop your confidence in drawing.



Colour palette

Burnt umber

Spruce green

Green earth

Darkest tone

Basic ripple shape

Spruce green over burnt umber

Narrow reflection

Green earth over spruce green

Wide reflection

Ash blue over green earth

Sunset gold

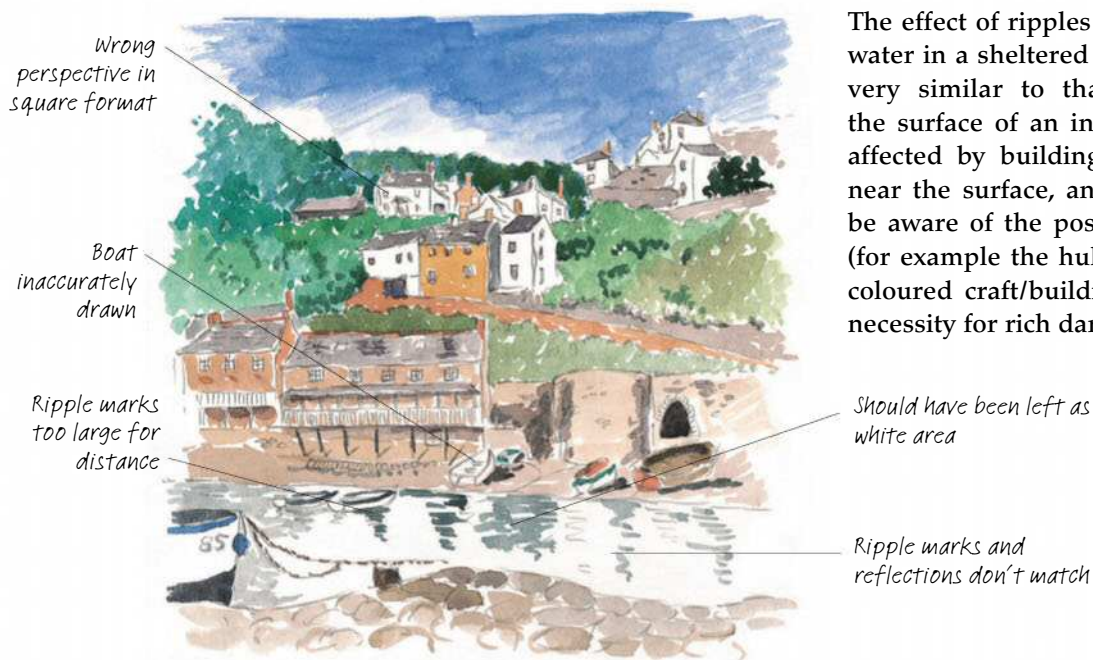
Rust

Juniper green

May green

Geranium lake

Harbour: Typical Problems



The effect of ripples upon the surface of water in a sheltered harbour can appear very similar to that of ripples upon the surface of an inland river. Both are affected by buildings and boats on or near the surface, and it is important to be aware of the positions of light areas (for example the hulls of white or light-coloured craft/buildings) as well as the necessity for rich dark shapes.

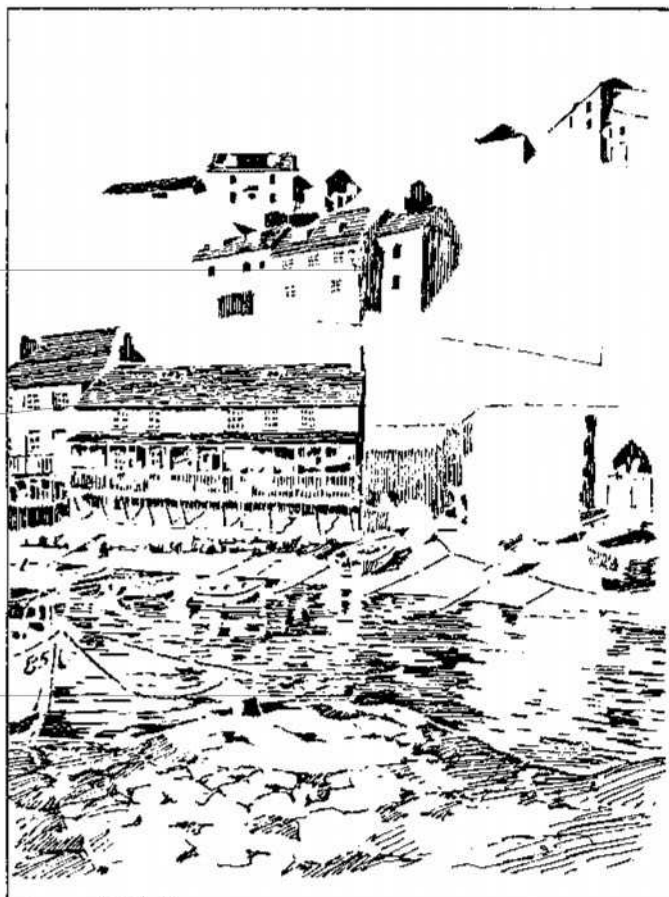
Monochrome study

Working in monochrome is very helpful in order to analyse tonal variations, but the addition of limited colour provides more overall interest.

Downward movement of brush for vertical sides

Side-to-side movement for roof

Side-to-side movement for ripples on water



Solutions

This painting demonstrates how the effect of colour can be reduced by using more neutral hues. For the reflections in the surface of the water, the majority of

ripple marks were depicted with a neutral hue, made by mixing burnt umber and French ultramarine; different strengths of the mix produced variations.

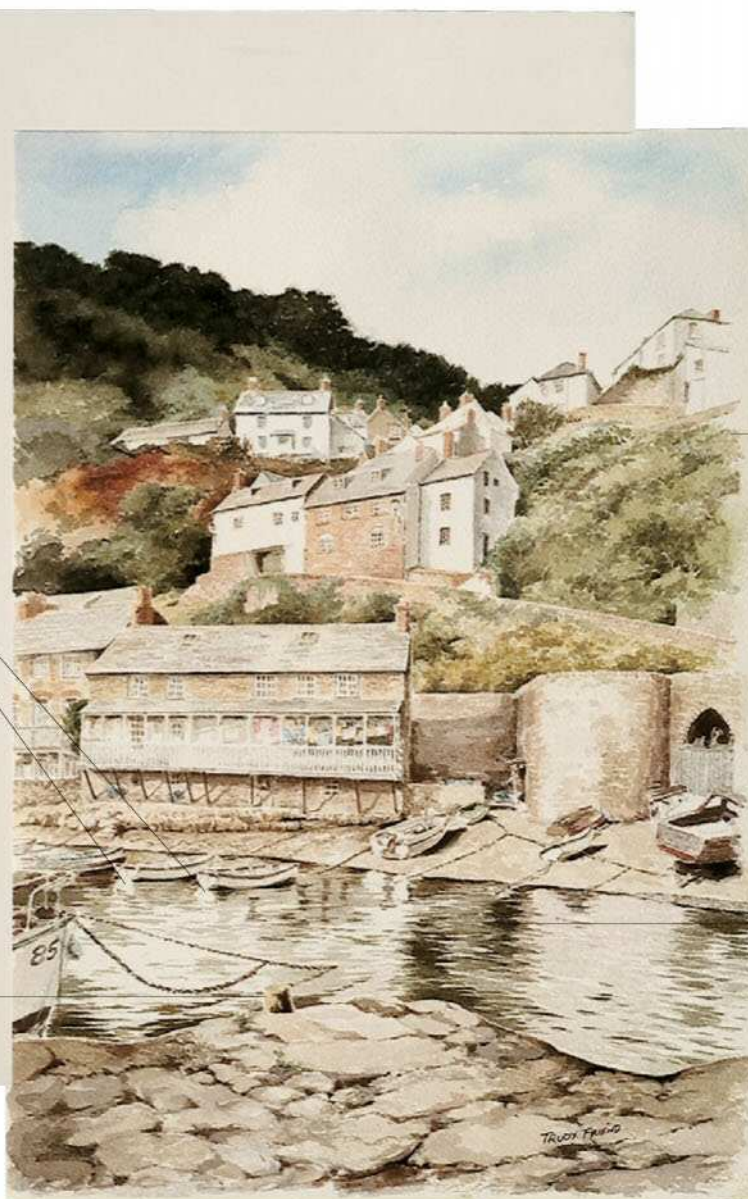
L-shaped mount indicates effect of crisp edges

As scale of boats is small, white paper has been retained for lightest areas. White paper also used to indicate highlights on water surface

Light edge to post ensures shape of shadow side is not lost against dark reflection in water

Images blended off at edges

Rich darks reflect shadow areas



Burnt umber + French ultramarine = Neutral hue



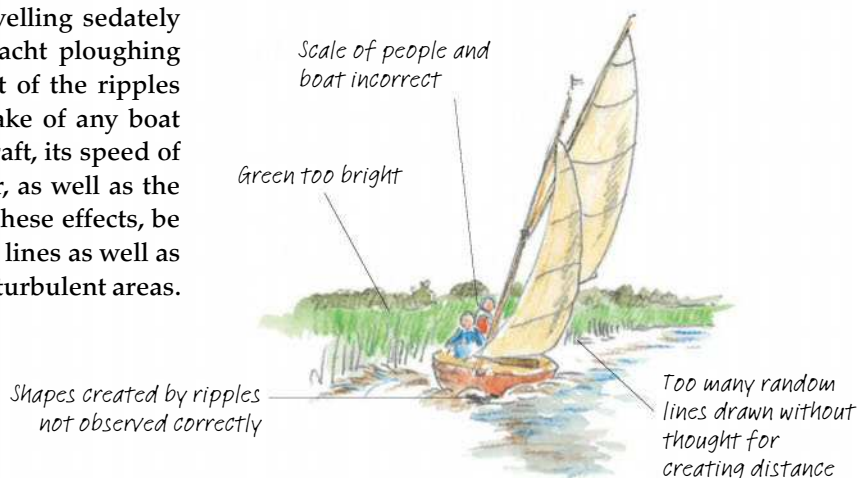
Touch
Press as you travel
Gently lift off for point
Keep stroke horizontal

Narrow horizontal strokes

Mixed width and pressure strokes

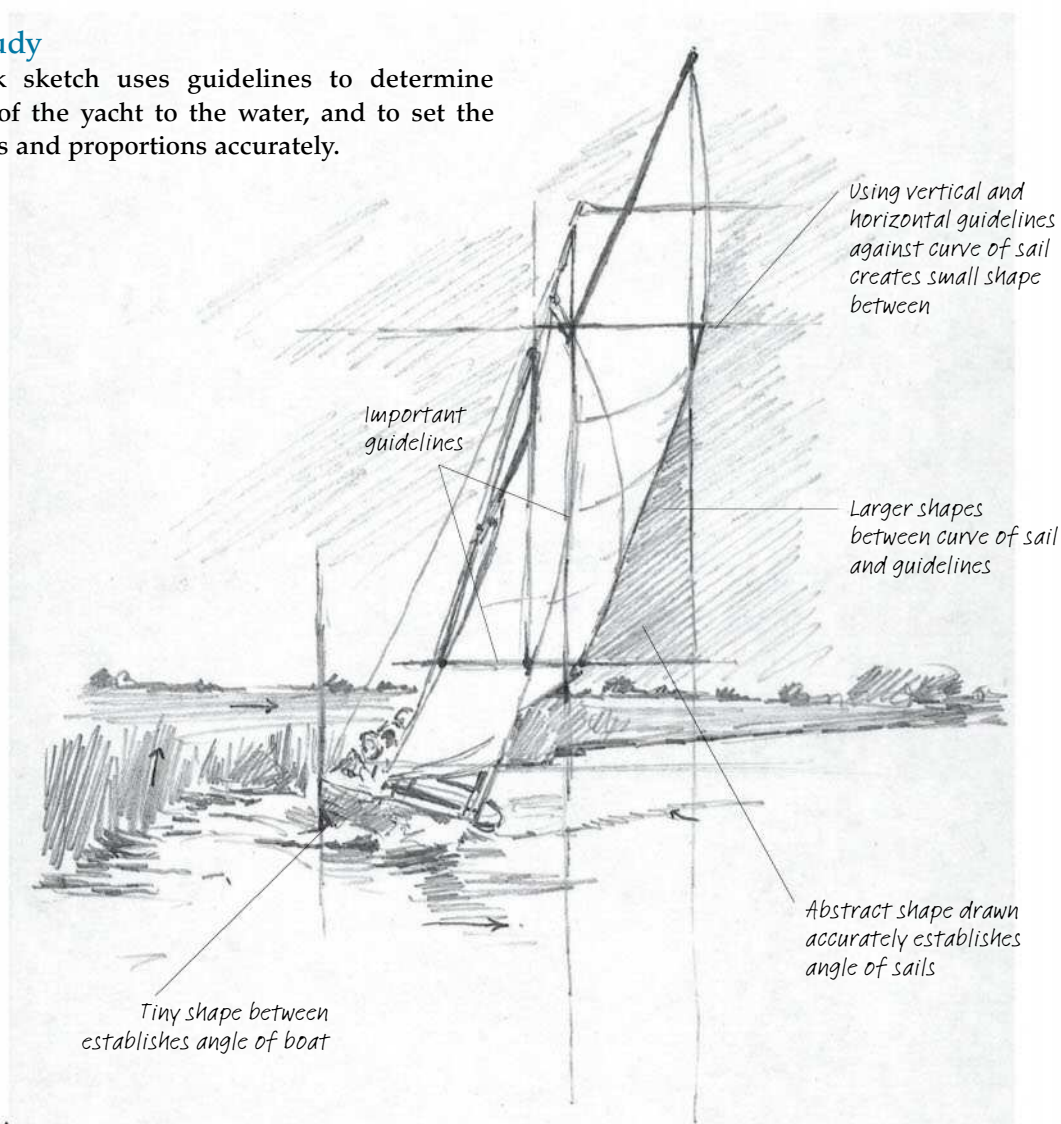
Boat on the River: Typical Problems

Whether you depict a large boat travelling sedately along a stretch of river or a small yacht ploughing through choppy water, it is the effect of the ripples that tells the story. Ripples in the wake of any boat are influenced by the weight of the craft, its speed of propulsion and the width of the river, as well as the weather conditions. When depicting these effects, be aware of the importance of horizontal lines as well as the direction of movement within the turbulent areas.



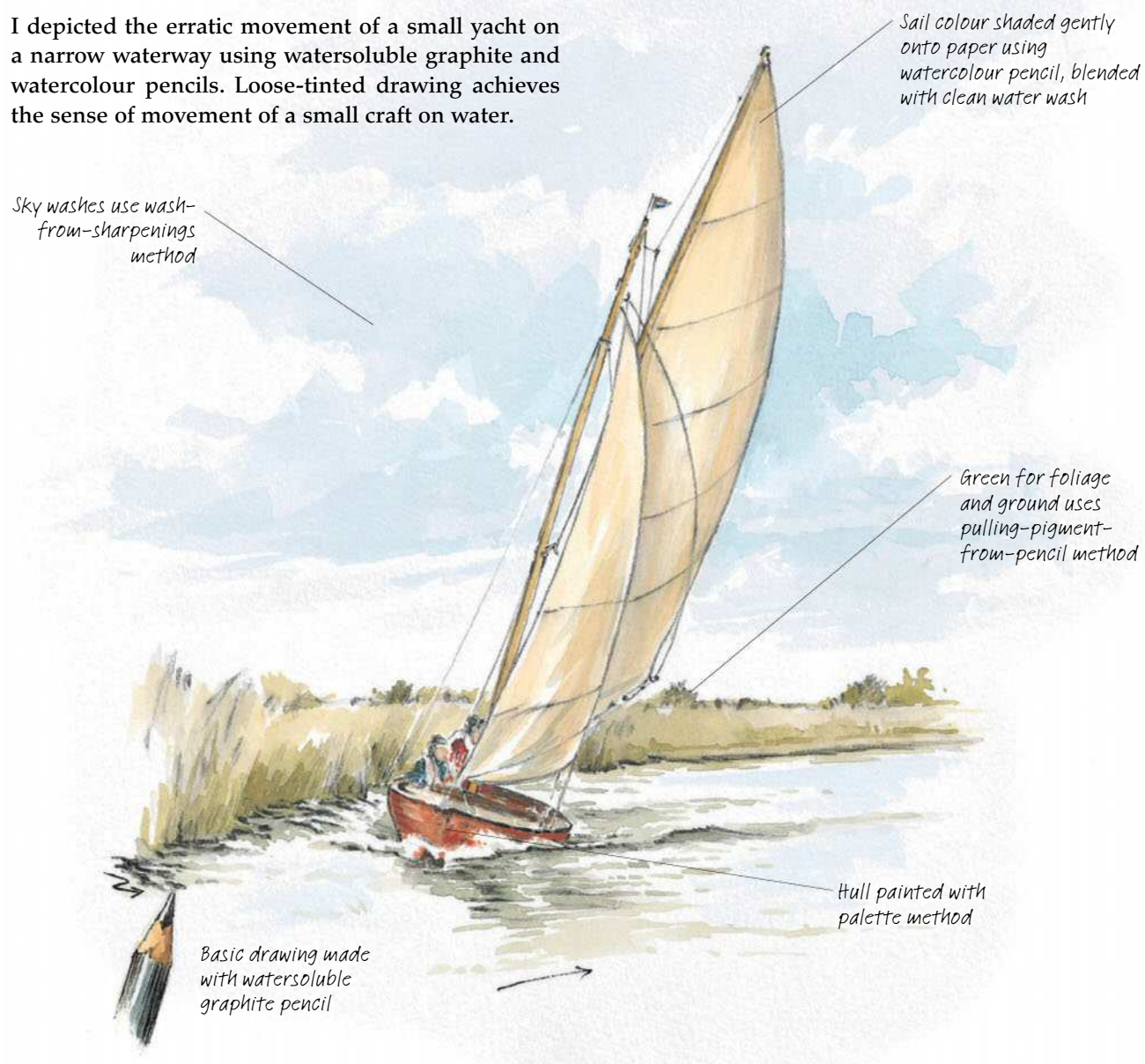
Pencil study

This quick sketch uses guidelines to determine the angle of the yacht to the water, and to set the dimensions and proportions accurately.



Solutions

I depicted the erratic movement of a small yacht on a narrow waterway using watersoluble graphite and watercolour pencils. Loose-tinted drawing achieves the sense of movement of a small craft on water.



Methods for yacht

Watersoluble graphite pencil

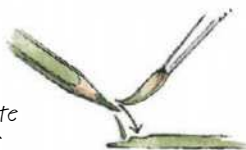


Erratically drawn directional lines



Pulling pigment from pencil

Flick pigment from pencil down into reservoir to create pigmented water



Use wet brush
Start with reservoir of clean water

Wash from sharpenings

Sharpen pencil into dry, clean palette



Add clean water to create pigmented liquid



Palette method

Create pat of hue by shading area with watercolour pencil



Touch wet brush onto pigment and use as watercolour paint in pan



Demonstration: Waterfall

Whether portraying a large, spectacular waterfall cascading over a cliff, or the smaller variety tumbling over and through rocks and boulders, an artist is faced with the challenge of expressing directional movement when tackling this subject.

This is best analysed and understood by observing less hectic falls, and in this demonstration I have isolated various aspects for the artist's consideration. The drawing opposite was made using watersoluble graphite pencil and watercolour.

Sketching from life (*below*)

When sketching from life prior to developing a watercolour painting, using watersoluble graphite is helpful as the same medium can also be used with watercolour in the final work.



Planning the composition (*right*)

Consider the format for your composition, whether portrait – where water tumbles vertically – or landscape, where you may also introduce horizontal pooling and placement of rocks and boulders.

DIAGRAMMATIC SKETCH

After the spontaneity of initial sketches, closer observation, with more controlled drawing, reveals the structure and direction of movement within the composition.

In this diagrammatic representation a little extra width has been added to some areas of water. The superimposed arrows show my thoughts on paper with regard to the directional brushstrokes I will use to depict the rush of water.



First stage (right)

I used smooth drawing paper for the sketches and studies shown opposite, but switched to Saunders Waterford Cold-Pressed (NOT) 300gsm (140lb) paper for the painting, as it suited both the pencil and watercolour.

Lightly draw main structures using
watersoluble graphite pencil

Block in pale hues with swift
application of the brush

Paint around areas to retain as
touched by direct sunlight

Be conscious of direction of
foliage growth

Foreground drawing may be
more detailed

Take care
to retain
the light
areas

Developing the painting (below)

Arrow indicates
direction of
strokes for
background trees

Retain
pure white
paper for
highlights

Swiftly
applied, long,
downward
strokes for
falling water

Using on-your-toes brush
angle, push a variety of
tiny strokes out to
suggest foliage

Holding brush at normal
writing angle, sweep strokes
directionally for bank

Using only first half of hairs,
make place-and-sweep
strokes for larger leaves

Rich, dark shadow recess shapes

Mountains and Hills

Drawing exercises

These strokes demonstrate how to achieve contrasts of rough, jagged movements and smooth, gradated tone. For an aggressive use of tone to suggest hard, uncompromising shapes, lines of a similar nature can

be introduced. Smoothly applied, gentle gradated toning requires more care and a sympathetic approach.

*Tonal block
4B pencil*



*Diagonally applied
jagged lines using
varied pressure*



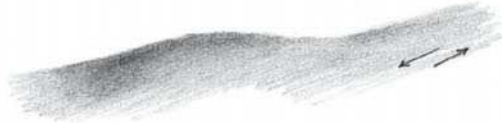
*Twist the pencil
at the end of the
firm strokes for
slender tails*



Contrasting fine 'edge' lines



*Strong, forceful diagonal
toning using chisel
side of pencil*



*Carefully applied, gentle
diagonal strokes suggest
undulations*

CHOOSING PRESSURES

The amount of pressure placed upon your pencil when making a variety of strokes needs careful consideration. To avoid areas of pale toning appearing too dark (e.g. when depicting distance) and areas with strong contrasts of dark against light (white) appearing too grey (foreground images in strong light), practise the differ-

ent pressures in advance. Increase the pressure upon your pencil to the maximum without breaking the lead, and then decrease it to the minimum, to just graze the paper's surface and encourage the pale tone and white paper to blend imperceptibly.

*4B pencil
Dark tone*

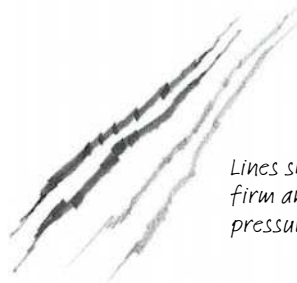


*Firm up and down
(diagonal) movement,
maximum pressure*

Medium tone



Gentle pressure



*Lines showing
firm and light
pressure strokes*



*Smooth tonal shape using
firm pressure*



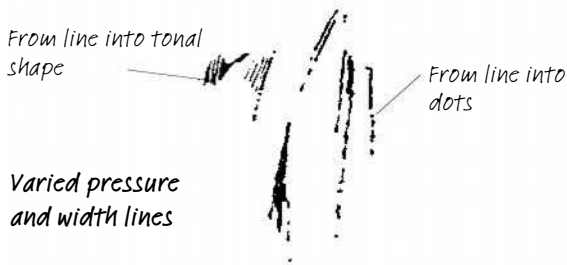
*Continuous varied-pressure tonal strip overlaid with
varied-pressure lines*



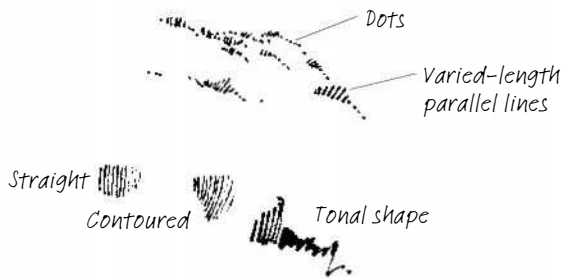
Light pressure tonal shape

Pen and ink

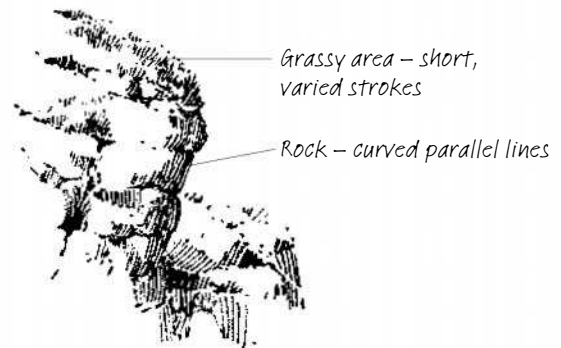
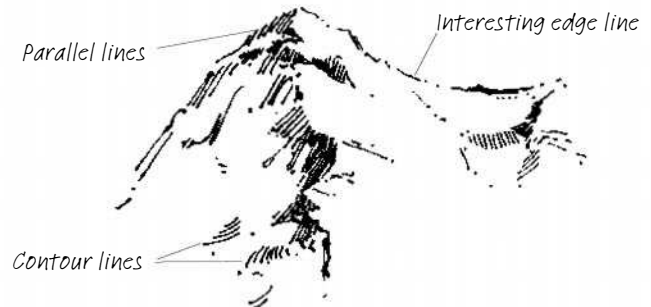
The clarity of marks made with pen and ink offers opportunities for varied strokes to work effectively



Lines depicting grass and rocks

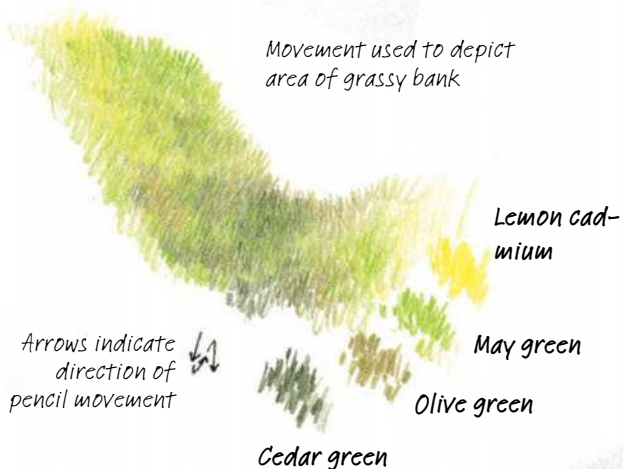


together – for example, combining straight and curved parallel lines with dots, dashes and solid tonal (block) shapes.



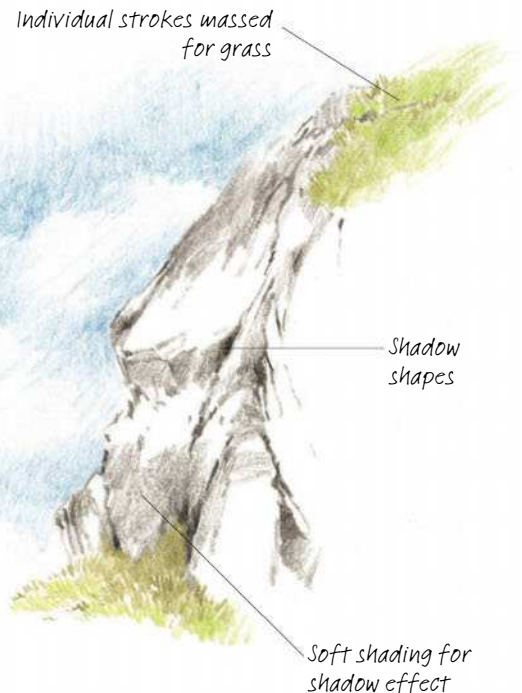
Watercolour pencils

Watercolour pencils are very effective when used dry on different paper surfaces. Here, they have been used on a heavy cartridge paper, where they produce a soft effect.



Tone dark behind to bring light side forward

To depict certain bush or tree shapes, the same method can be used as for grass



Watercolour pencils

In the same way that the pencil exercises on the previous pages rely to a great extent upon varied pressure strokes, those shown here also depend upon pencil pressure to achieve their effects.

Leaf mass impressions comprise abstract shapes, as only a few leaves appear in their entirety when viewed en masse. It is more usual to see the overlapping leaves as an overall abstract image.

Abstract shapes

Arrows indicate directions in which pencil is firmly pushed in different directions to establish shapes



Recognizable representation

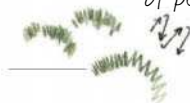
Established leaf and leaf mass shapes joined by structure lines of twigs



Zigzags

Simple zigzag application in movement of fan shape starts process of depicting distant trees on hillsides

Arrows indicate direction of pencil movements



Introduction of clean water to blend



Wet tip of pencil and transfer swiftly to paper to achieve rich darks



Dry on dry

Leave some white paper to depict light areas



For a more diverse image, wet the paper first and press the tip of the pencil firmly onto the damp surface

Sweeping strokes

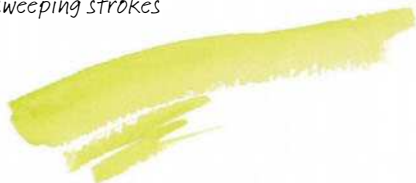
Large expanses of fields and hillsides require sweeping strokes. Watercolour pencils can be used in much

the same way as watercolour washes. Three different methods of use are illustrated here – practise them all to see how each one works.

Palette method

Place wetted brush onto pigment and transfer to artwork with sweeping strokes

Press dry colour firmly onto paper, making dense tonal block



Dry pencil method

Shade pencil dry on dry over area to be coloured

Wash clean water over pigment to blend



Touch-tip-of-pencil method

Touch tip of pencil with brush dipped in clean water

Transfer to artwork for smooth washes



The longer the brush moves on the pigment, the darker the tone



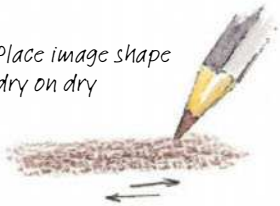
Dry, wet and dry approach

Images can be blocked in position dry, and a clean water wash can then be placed over them. This

achieves an area of solid colour/tint with a smooth appearance. When this is dry, fine detailed drawing can be overlaid to follow form and create texture.

Controlled textures

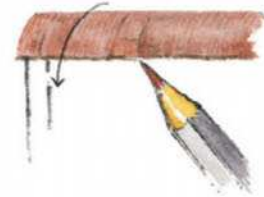
Place image shape dry on dry



Wash clean water over to blend and allow to dry



Draw directionally dry on dry to follow form and suggest contoured texture



Watersoluble graphite

Watersoluble graphite is useful for sketchbook work. Images may be swiftly sketched on site and elaborated upon at home, using watercolour pencils. The subjects can be interpreted in detail or in the form of tonal blocks and shapes.

Do not assume that the whole image is safely fixed in position once it has been washed with water. There may be small areas that you have unintentionally missed, and these will blend into each new application of a clean colour – however, you may wish for this random effect to happen.

Derwent 8B sketching pencil



Sweep clean water across image



Dark images remain with lighter tones created from areas touched with water

Push and pull strokes to suggest leaf masses



Intensity of tone achieved by adding water

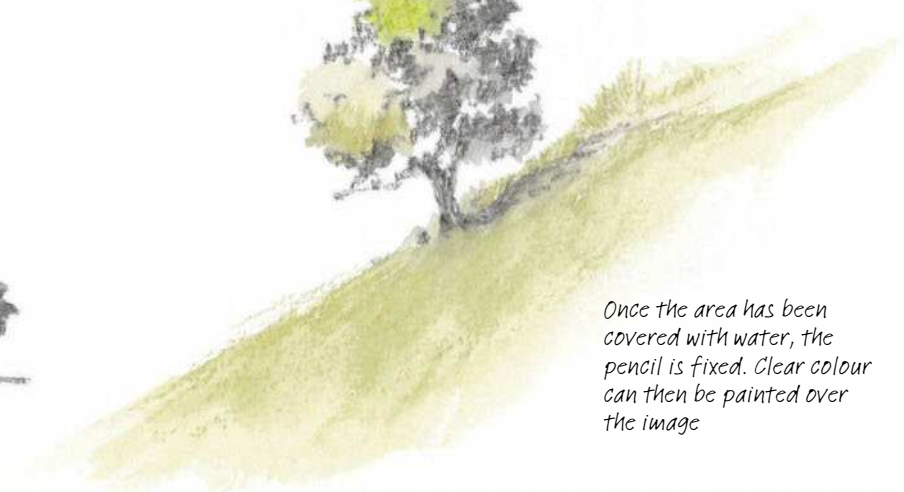
Clean colour applied using method from previous pages



Block-in method, where strokes are massed to form tonal shape



Once the area has been covered with water, the pencil is fixed. Clear colour can then be painted over the image



Locations and Views: Typical Problems

Low hills, found in gently undulating countryside, are often clad in a variety of trees, and the rounded forms of deciduous trees contrast with the pointed tips of conifers. Distant buildings, either dotted amongst the trees on the hillside or grouped at its base, can offer

contrasting shapes to the expanses of fields and open spaces. The latter in their turn provide an interesting patchwork effect, and if all this is reflected in the surface of a winding stream or river, there is much for the eye to take in.

Black watercolour pencil strokes blend into distant background hue through careless application

Too many different greens used without being mixed correctly

Drawing lacks observation

Vertical and horizontal strokes unrelated and not describing anything about river bank

All colours used straight from pencil – colour-mixing exercises would be of value



View up river

On location it is possible to make a number of sketches from one position and then change the view entirely

by turning to the right or left. This sketch shows tree-clad hills with an assortment of buildings grouped along their base, following the bank of a river.

Interesting silhouette of tall conifers along skyline

First drawing stage blocking in dark areas behind light forms of tree tops

Strongly applied horizontal shadow lines

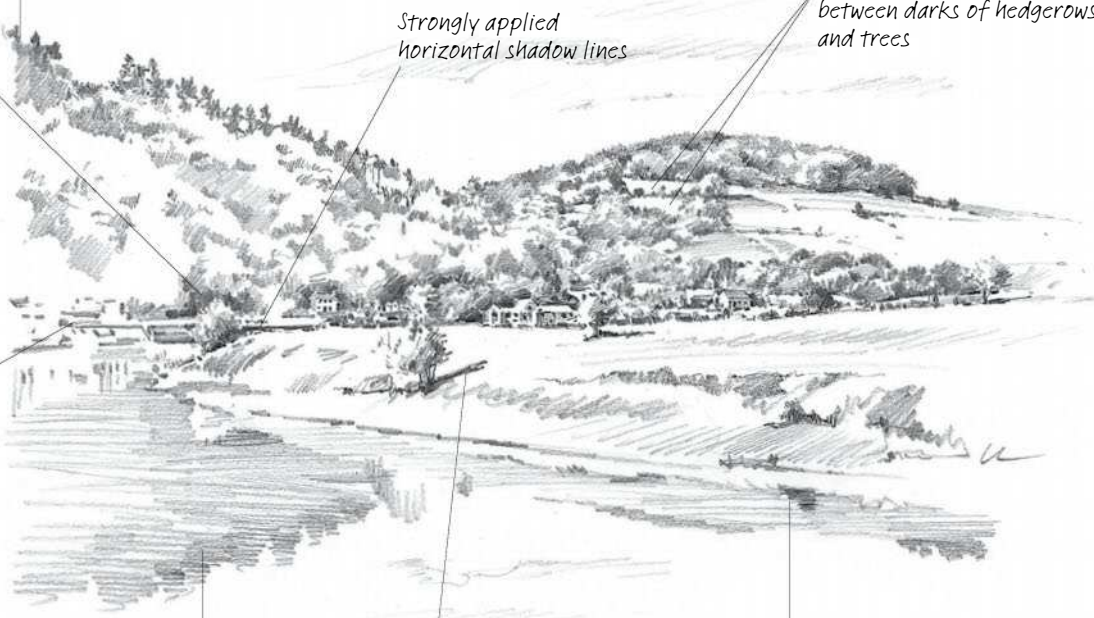
Light shapes of fields between darks of hedgerows and trees

Second drawing stage blocking in shadow shapes of buildings

Area where distant trees on hillside reflected in surface of river

Tree shadow slanted diagonally up bank

Small dark reflection from shadow area on river bank



Solutions

These two watercolour-pencil views across the river show a Dutch barn. This view, with wide expanses of water in the foreground, allows the inclusion of foliage on a tree on the near-side bank, depicted mainly by dark silhouettes. Watercolour pencils were used

delicately dry on dry before clean water was gently washed over the images to blend them. After the first layer had dried, subsequent layers were built.

Saunders Waterford Rough paper was used for both these demonstrations.



Low hills as backdrop

Moving in closer to the focal point and using the hills as a backdrop, this drawing shows a looser approach

to the scene. All the underdrawing was executed in watersoluble graphite pencil prior to freely applying watercolour pencil washes using the palette method.



Larger Hills: Typical Problems

From the gently undulating hills on the previous pages, we now look at higher structures whose scale is emphasized by the presence of small islands in the area of water. From this distance the water seems

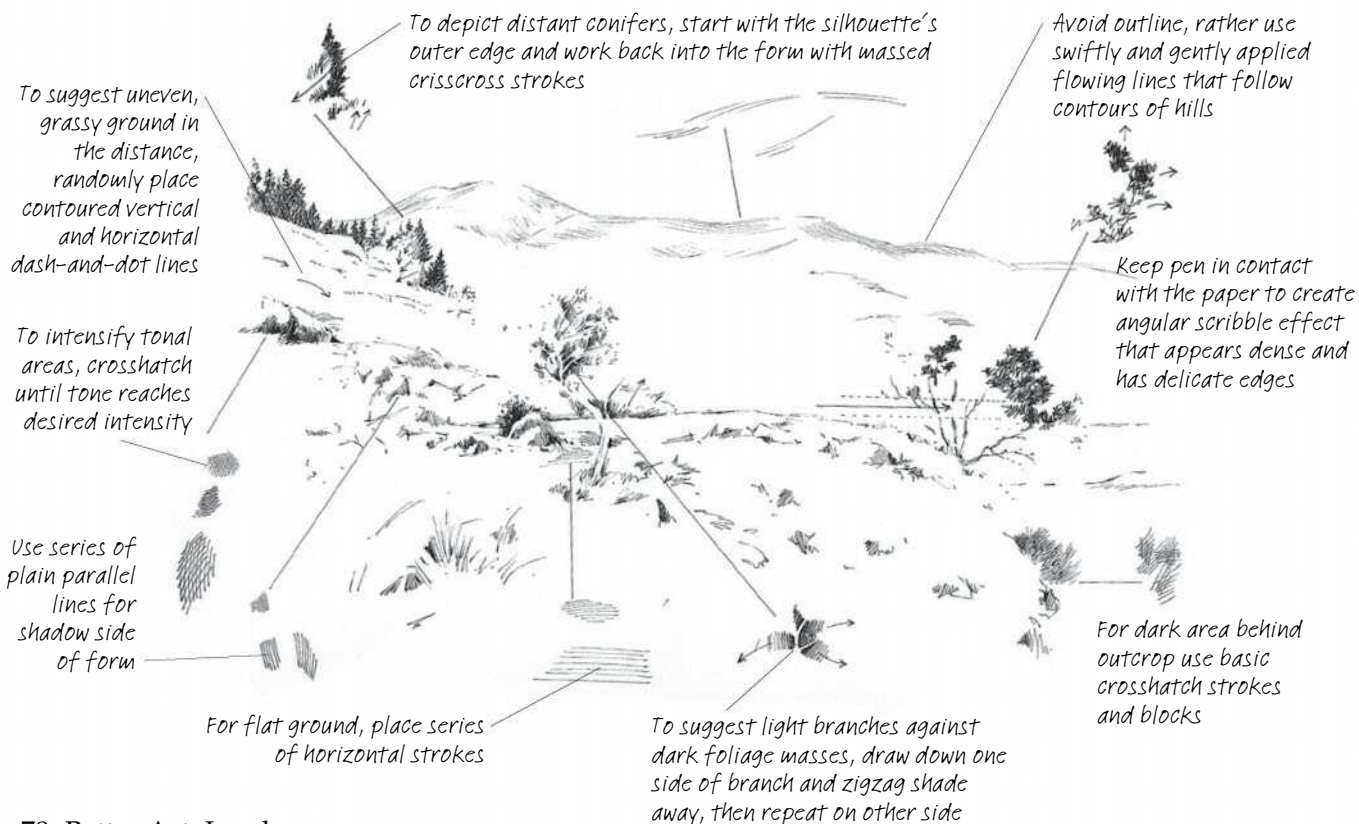
undisturbed, and it can be suggested by a simple, flat wash reflecting a blue sky. Working with tinted washes over a drawing executed in either permanent or watersoluble media encourages a looser approach.



Working in pen and ink

A few images that may be found in this type of setting have been arranged here with method suggestions for you to practise and put into effect in your own

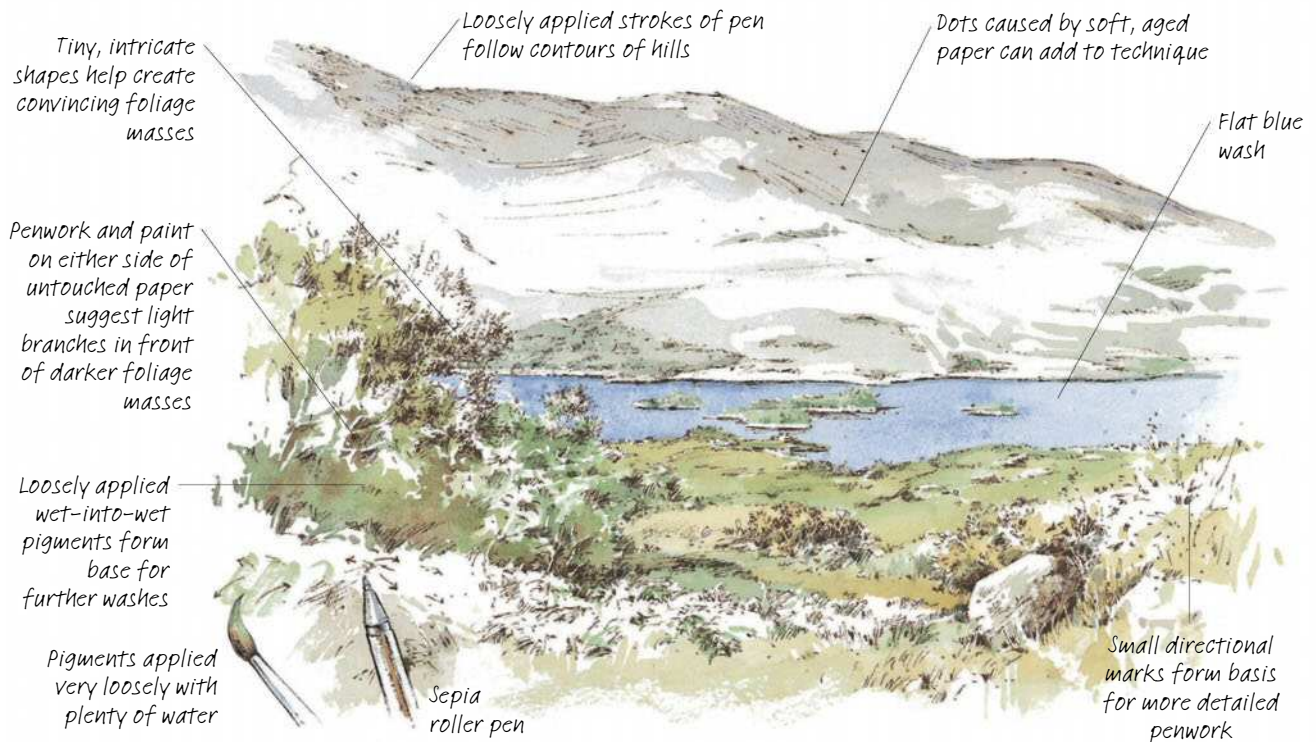
studies.



Solutions

I used an old sheet of paper for this painting, to encourage freedom of thought, as it prevents one from feeling the work is too precious, releases inhibitions

and increases confidence; and I treated this scene as a learning exercise in which the methods shown on the opposite page could be put into practice.



Trial and error

Observing rocks close up helps you to understand the subject and how it relates to other components within the view. Using charcoal pencil marks as the underdrawing encourages a looser approach – in addition, I suggest you sometimes use old watercolour paper

offcuts for a trial-and-error exercise – a learning experience rather than a careful study, as in the drawing above. The first stage is to draw shadow lines on rocks and then gently apply clean water over these directionally to fix them.



Mountains: Typical Problems

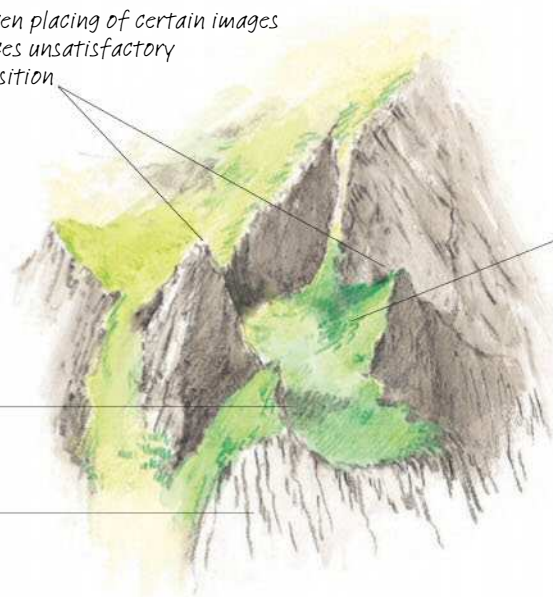
Snow-capped mountains often have grassy areas against the sheer rock face, lower down, where the air is warmer. The cool blue greys of upper slopes in shadow are replaced in lower regions by warmer hues in the rocks and bright, soft greens – where fresh young grasses spring to life among the crevices as well as over larger expanses. The stark contrasts of lights against darks bring this type of scenery to life.

Too-even placing of certain images produces unsatisfactory composition

Wrong choice of green in watercolour pencils

Not clear if this is shadow shape or area of rock

Worm-like lines do not suggest craggy shadow lines along cracks in rocks



Second stage: clean water brushed over dry pigment to blend

Third stage: fine, detailed drawing over dry paper using sharpened watercolour pencil over first washes

First stage: image drawn in neutral hue

First stage: grassy areas depicted by dry application of green



Fourth stage: draw around any images with direct sunlight falling across them

Fifth stage: enrich dark (shadow) areas by increasing pressure on pencil

Consider composition

It is important to compose your picture, even if it is only a study of details. Using just two watercolour pencils – representing grass and rock, respectively – a drawing can be made interesting simply by considering the angle at which the area is viewed and looking for textures as well as tones in the scene.

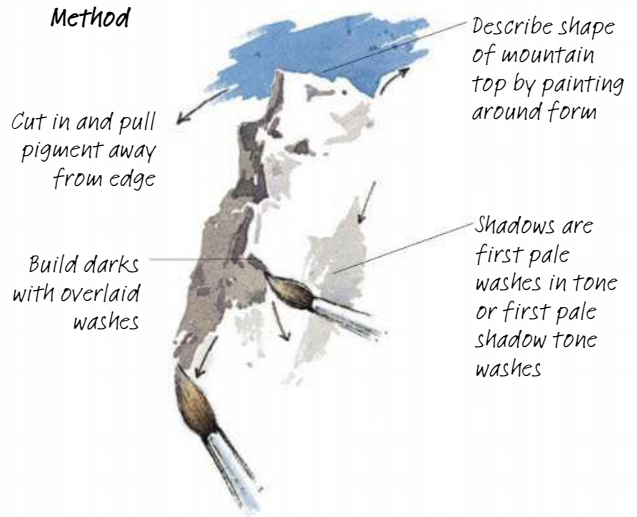
Some of the drawing was executed upon paper that was still slightly damp from a wash – this results in less texture in the drawing.

Solutions

Although this exercise was executed in watercolour, you can easily follow exactly the same methods using watercolour pencils. Either touch the tip of the pencils with clean water to lift pigment prior to application, or, in order to mix colours, use the palette method mentioned on page 74.

Remember to let your brushstrokes follow directions suggested to you by the form of the subject, for instance sweep strokes down and swirl them around to suggest the open area of grass.

Method



Sweep brushstrokes to follow shapes of clouds, adding clean water to diffuse edges

Paint dark silhouette side first and work inwards to depict shadows against snow

Cut in to snow-topped peaks with blue of sky and paint up and away into clean water, blending for clouds

Start with silhouettes of trees and pull downwards, allowing some white paper to remain in places

Paint simple shape to suggest area of grass, prior to painting shadows over dry pigment later

Pull down brushstrokes to represent trees

Swirl paint around and down to depict flat grassy areas

Spread wash outwards to increase width of coverage in foreground

Palest tone for underpainting

Medium tone for first overpainting

Rich, dark overpainting for shadow recess areas

Demonstration: Distant Mountain

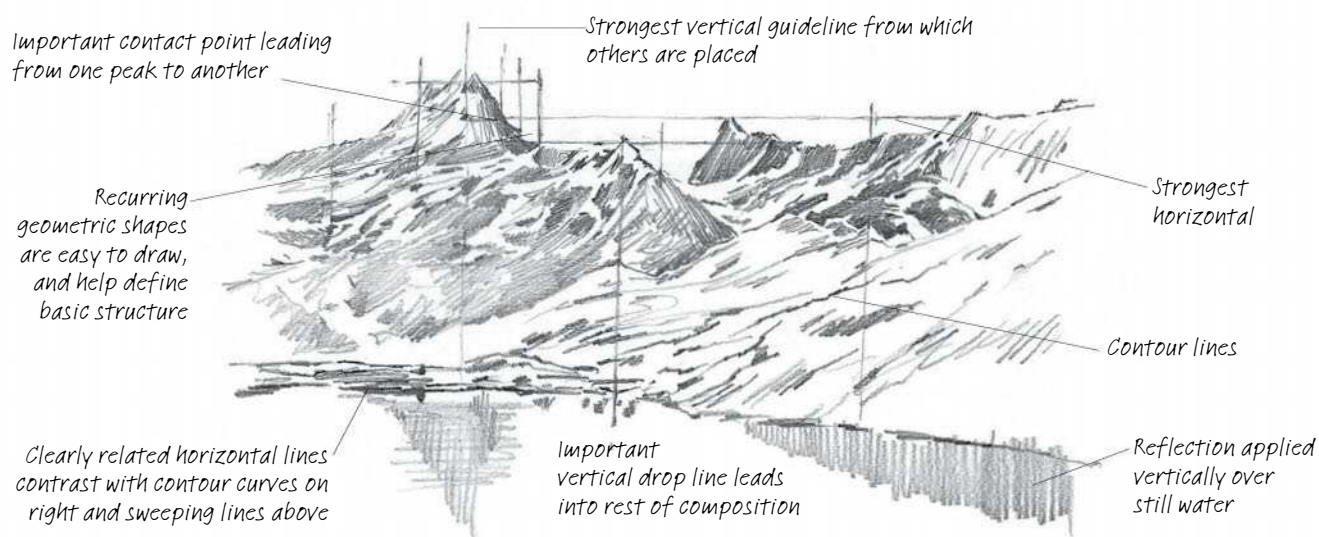
Distant mountains shrouded in mist or muted in tone and colour sometimes present the problem of how to subdue colours and tones without adding too much white to the paint.

After time spent giving some thought to this problem, I chose to use mixed media on a tinted paper to unify the tones. The underpainting was approached in a free style of relatively loosely applied, directional brush-

strokes using a very limited palette. It was my decision to subdue the colours with an overlaid wash that allowed the image to recede and sit comfortably in the distance.

Planning the composition

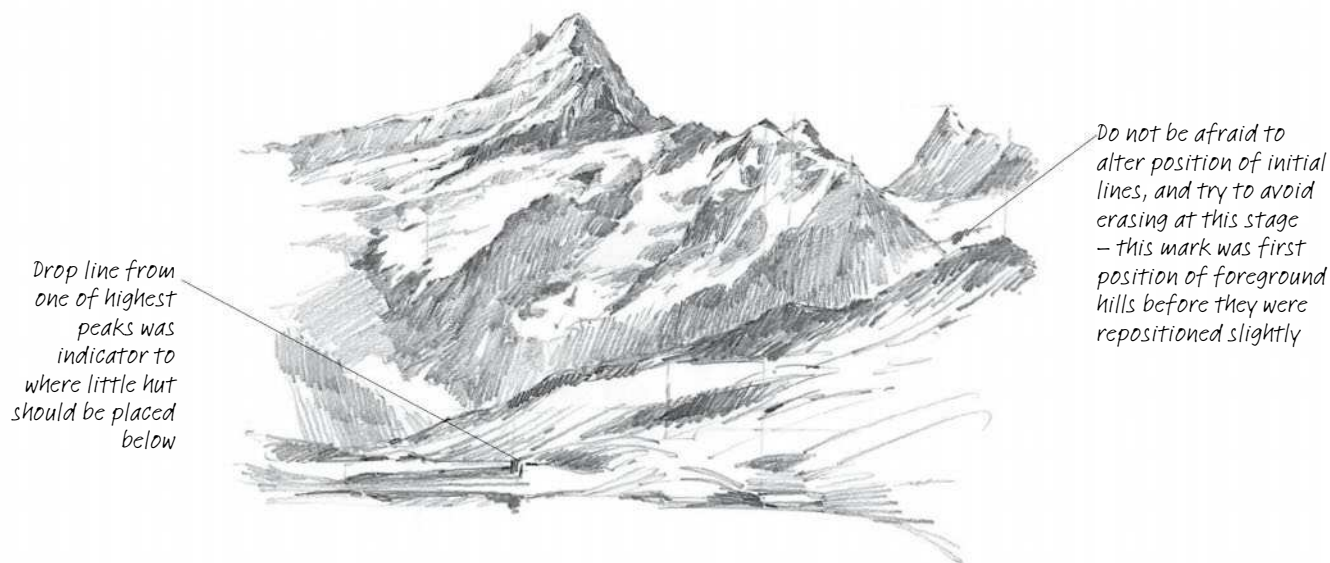
A rough sketch establishes the scene as a whole before deciding upon an aspect that will be chosen after consideration for the position of a focal point.



Choice of aspect

Moving in closer to the focal point in a working sketch, the main areas of tone were drawn freely with a soft pencil on cartridge paper.

With tracing paper placed over this drawing, upon which only the essential lines were depicted, the image could then be easily transferred to a suitable tinted surface, shown opposite.



Mixed-media painting

The use of an acrylic type of paint that is permanent once dry enables a wash of diluted white to be drawn across the whole of the underpainting using a flat brush. This gives a subdued effect without lifting or blending any of the colour beneath. When this surface is dry it forms a suitable base for fine, detailed

drawing. The softness of watercolour pencils led me to choose them as the second media.

I used Somerset Velvet, Newsprint Grey, as this paper has an appealing softness that encourages the use of watercolour pencil drawing – for completing the work over dry paint – and the tint of the paper was part of the final effect.

First stage: draw with brush, using varied pressure to spread and contract hairs respectively, to establish images

Second stage: sky painted freely with diagonally placed strokes

Fourth stage: detail drawn in with neutral watercolour pencil, working downwards and out from peak

Third stage: flat wash of diluted white pigment placed on dry underpainting, using flat brush for even distribution

Fourth stage: detail over foreground hills drawn in shades of green

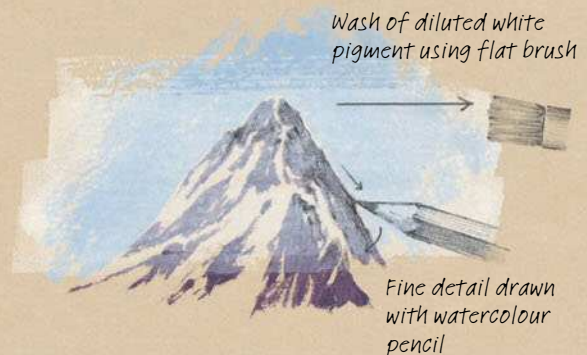
First stage: green and ochre hues used as underpainting for grassy hills

Light edge indicates mist in valley behind grassy hills

Second stage: surface of lake established using horizontally placed strokes

Contour strokes to follow forms

Method



Bridges and Buildings

Drawing exercises

These pencil strokes demonstrate how thick and thin lines can be achieved by turning the pencil after you

have established a chisel shape when making an initial tonal block with a soft pencil.

Tonal block

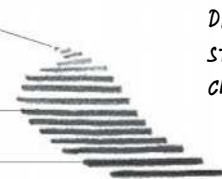


Varied pressure

Light pressure

Creating distance

Heavy (firm) pressure



Directional strokes using chisel edge



Have fun creating a variety of abstract lines and tonal areas relating to your subject as a warm-up exercise.

Tonal block shape



When grouped, suitable for window-pane impressions

On/off pressure contour lines

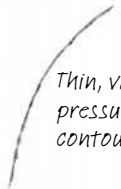
Thin lines



Thick lines



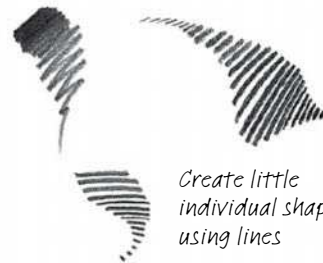
On/off pressure lines to suggest tiled roof



Thin, varied pressure contour line



Filling in with parallel lines or continuous close squiggle



Create little individual shapes using lines

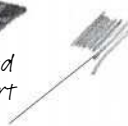


Line and tone



Tonal block shape

Either create tonal blocks separated by white paper or start with pale tonal shape



Add darker shapes, leaving first tone in certain areas

Suitable for sketching quick background areas



Rapidly applied varied direction squiggles

CHOOSING PENCILS

Hard and soft grades of pencil react differently on various paper surfaces. You may find you prefer to use a harder HB

or 2B on a softer, textured surface, and a softer 4B or 9B upon a smoother, white paper for richer contrasts.

2H



HB



2B



4B



6B

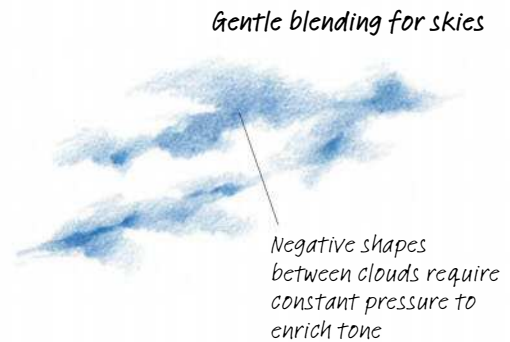
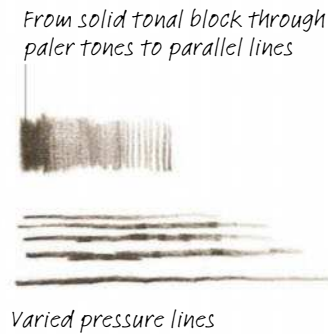
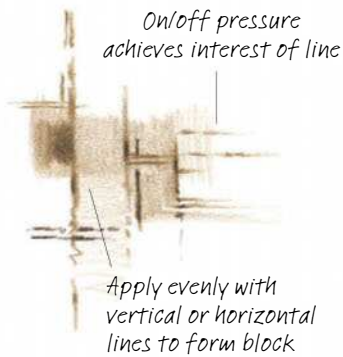


9B



'Studio' coloured pencils

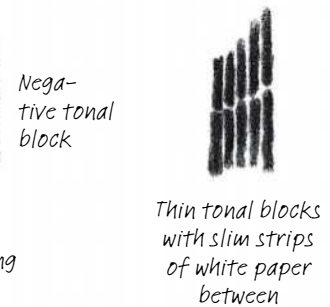
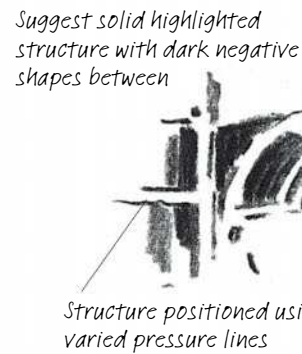
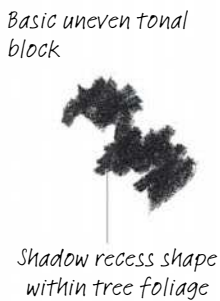
This medium is useful for creating flat tonal areas and interesting lines.



Charcoal pencil

Charcoal pencils are light, medium or dark. They break easily, need to be handled with care and require the use of fixative, but are well worth these

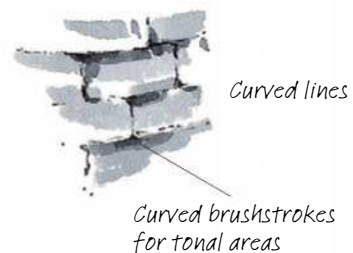
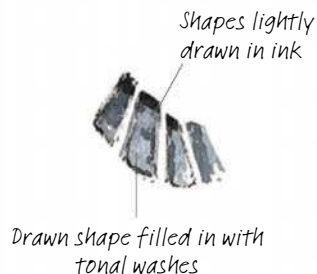
considerations, as they encourage loose, exciting application and produce an interesting range of contrasts and textures.



Ink and wash

A monochrome wash used with ink drawing is very effective for drawing both man-made and natural

structures. For this exercise, the ink drawing was made first and the wash was freely applied over the linear work when it had dried completely.

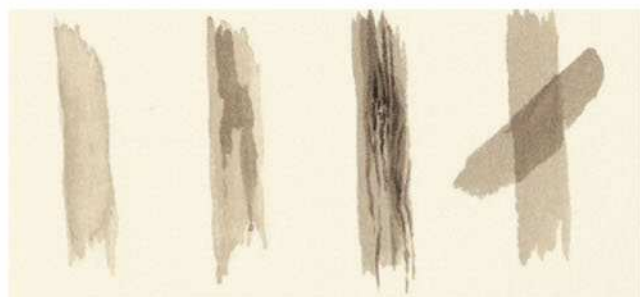


Watercolour exercises

These watercolour exercise strokes relate to images within this theme and, like the pencil exercises on the previous pages, benefit from being applied with on/off pressure and angled movements of the brush. Working wet into wet – adding water for blending and dropping dark pigment onto damp paper, thus enabling the effect of bleeding to appear – contrasts with working wet on dry, overlaying a wash onto paint that has already dried.

Overlays

Ensure the first wash has thoroughly dried before you gently apply a second wash either fully or partially over the underpainting. Try this exercise in monochrome first so that you can become fully aware of the tonal variations as you build the layers.



First pale tones

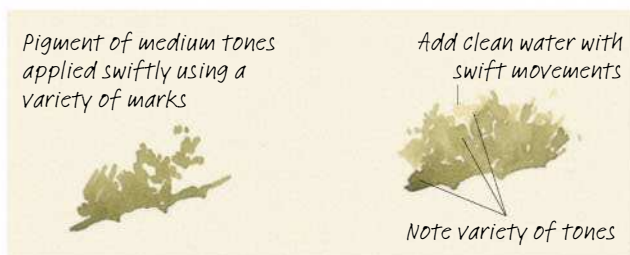
Darker tones super-imposed

Detail drawn in using tip of brush dipped in darker pigment

Example of overlaid wash

Tonal variations

When tones are not built up using overlaid washes, they can be swiftly achieved by adding clean water to certain areas of the existing damp pigment. This incorporates the wet-into-wet method, and there will also be clean water strokes that come in to touch edges of pigmented areas and encourage bleeding, giving you more control within this method.



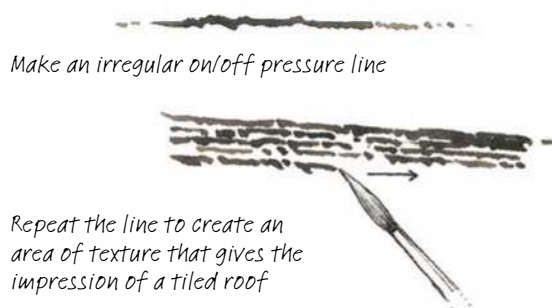
Pigment of medium tones applied swiftly using a variety of marks

Add clean water with swift movements

Note variety of tones

On/off pressure lines

These on/off lines are very similar to those used in the combination exercises on page 60; here, however, they are not combined, but used in a repetitious manner.



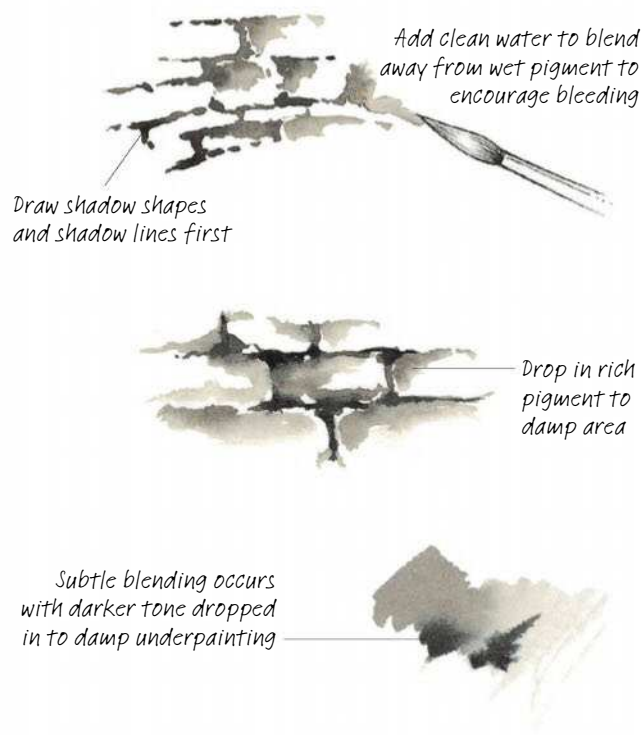
Make an irregular on/off pressure line

Repeat the line to create an area of texture that gives the impression of a tiled roof

Touch and blend

When depicting stones, bricks and the like, look to create the desired effect with as few marks as possible on the paper. Be selective, not only with the amount of darks you draw or place with your brush, but also with how much (or little) clean water you introduce to cause blending – and be aware of the importance of retaining white paper as part of the image.

Stones and bricks



Add clean water to blend away from wet pigment to encourage bleeding

Draw shadow shapes and shadow lines first

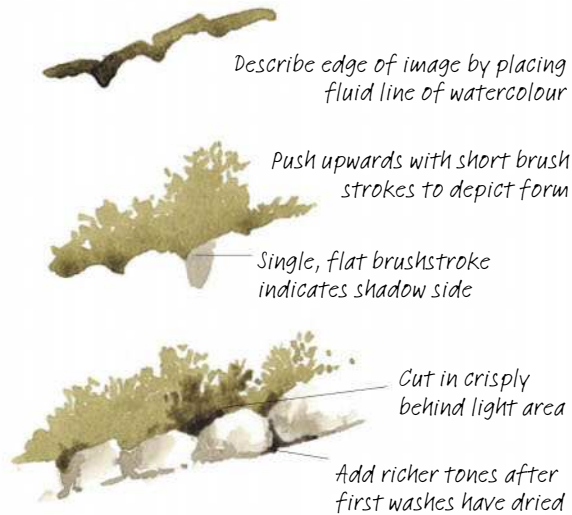
Drop in rich pigment to damp area

Subtle blending occurs with darker tone dropped in to damp underpainting

Dark behind

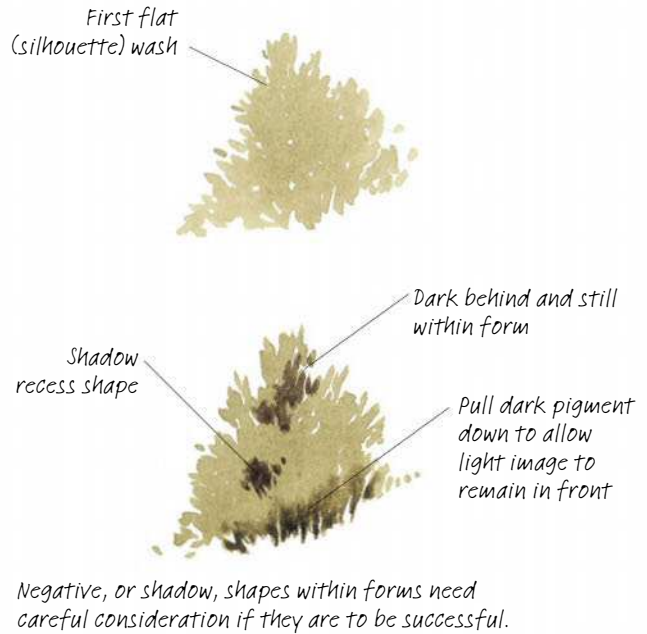
The best way to make your light images stand forward is to introduce a darker tone directly behind the form. It is easy to inadvertently allow brushstrokes that indicate a background area to overlap the light image in front, but doing so fails to create the desired effect. This exercise illustrates how you can avoid losing clarity by cutting in.

Mix plenty of water with your pigment to retain a reservoir



Dark within

Quite often it is necessary to depict shadow recess areas within the forms. Here, it is important to understand exactly what you are trying to say with your areas of tone, so make sure the recess shape is convincing.

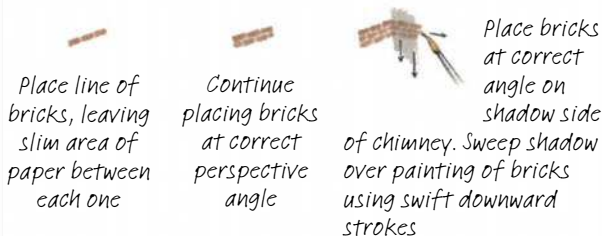


BUILDING FEATURES

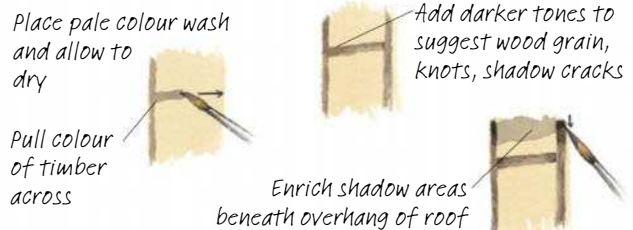
Thatched roof



Brick chimney



Timber-framed building



Leaded windows



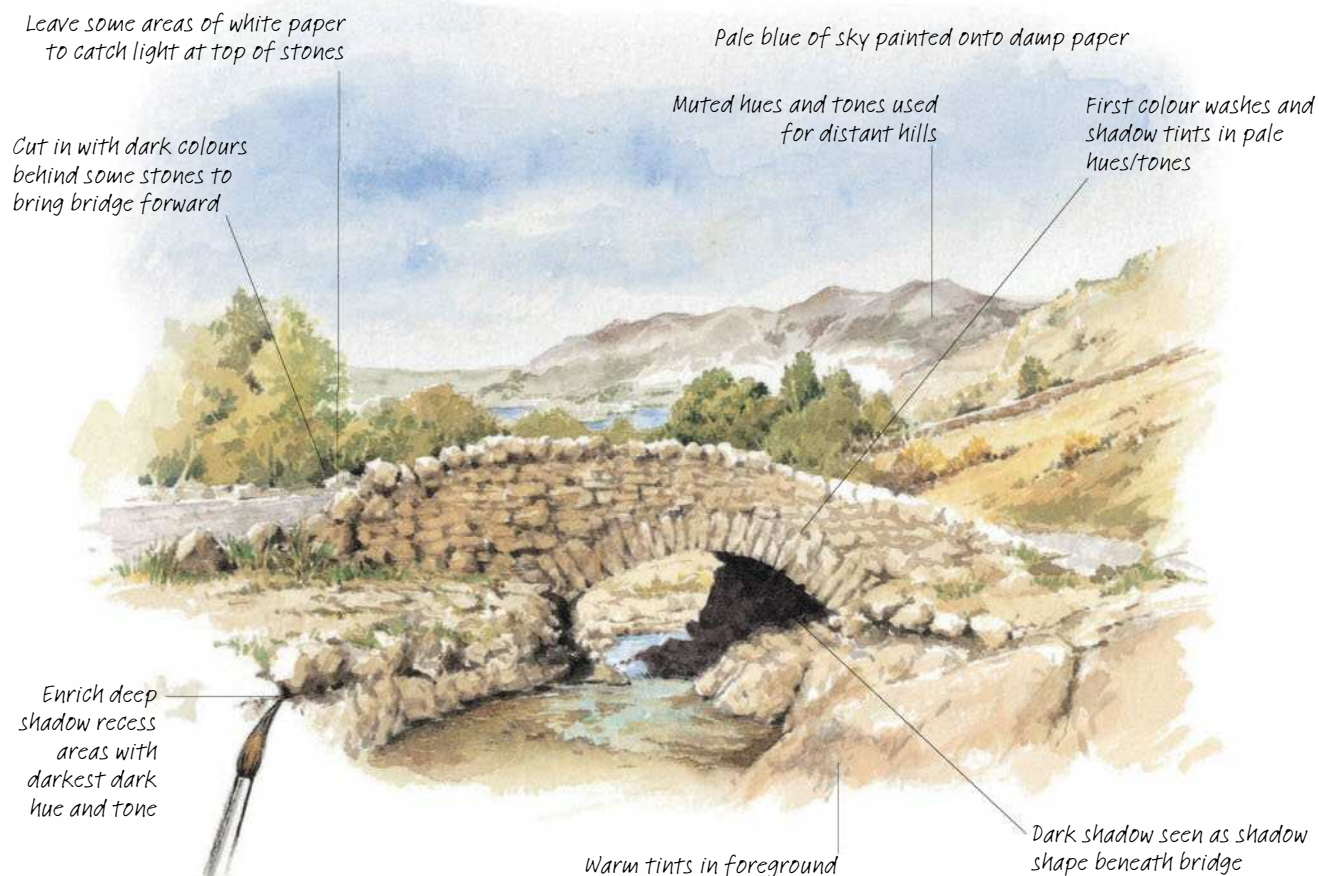
Small Structures: Typical Problems

Small structures may not have the grandeur of their larger counterparts, as shown overleaf, but they do possess their own particular charm. A small stone bridge and a compact country cottage are depicted here in watercolour and show both methods of laying washes:

wet-on-dry, used for the cottage, and a controlled wet-into-wet approach, used for the bridge. You can also see problems relating to the inclusion (or, should I say, intrusion) of white paper and the overuse of outlines, as well as with the choice of colours.



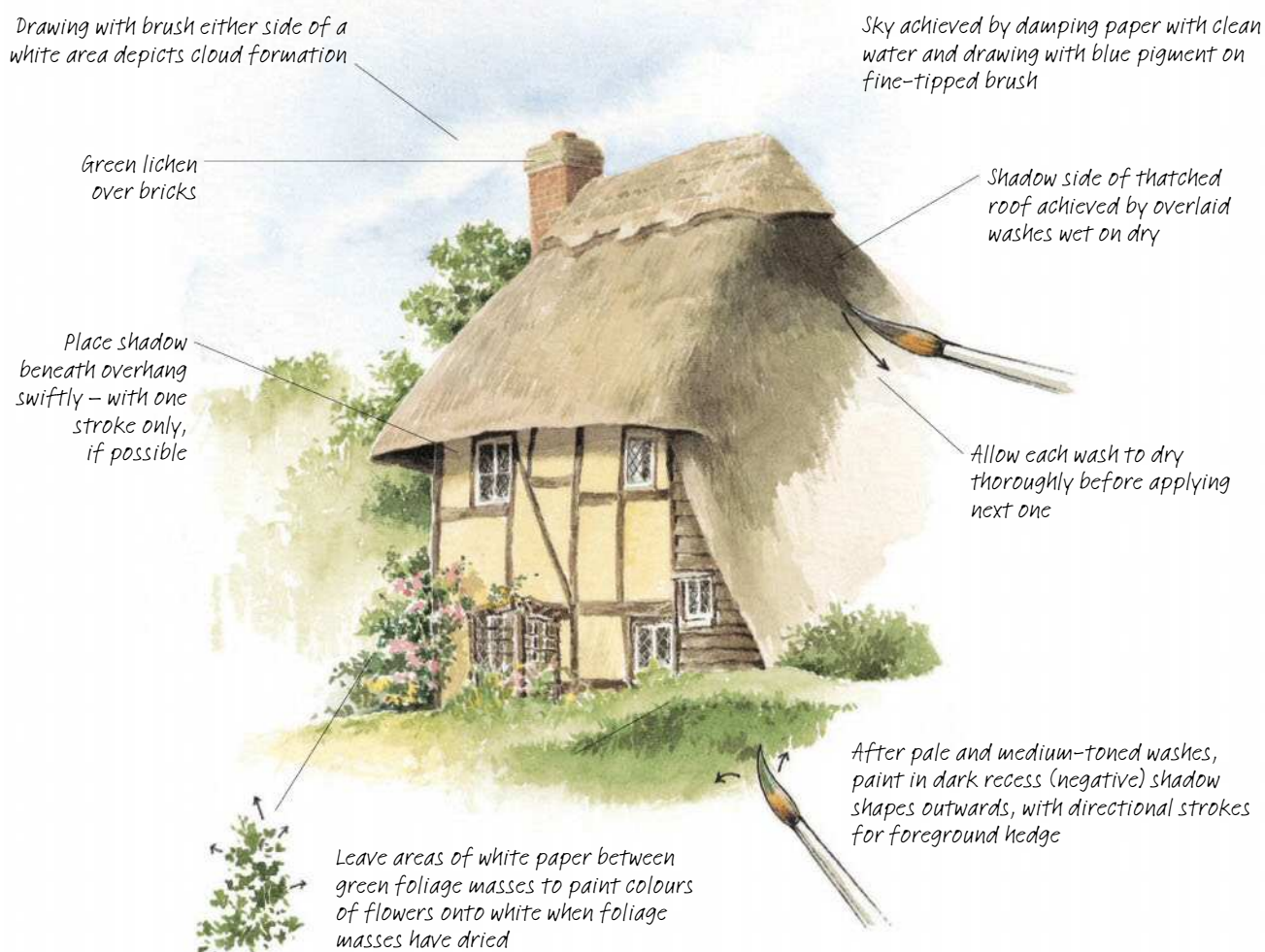
Solution



Small Structures: Typical Problems



Solution



Buildings on Bridges: Typical Problems

Towers on suspension bridges present a structure that offers height as well as width and length. This view depicts an angle from which the graceful lines of massive girders can be drawn to lead the observer's eye towards the focal point of the main tower block. This is enhanced by the contrasting, sharp-edged shape of a strong area of shadow.

Coloured pencils encourage a delicacy of interpretation in the form of detailed drawing, enhancing the subject. Problems may arise, however, if the chosen pencils are not the sort that are ideal for detailed work, as in the sketch below, where the width of the pencil's coloured strip combined with heavy-handed use prevents the delicacy required for this scale and interpretation from being achieved.

Pen and ink sketch

The sketch below was executed using the dot/dash approach combined with vertical- (parallel-) lined shading. I used a finer nib for the shadow areas.

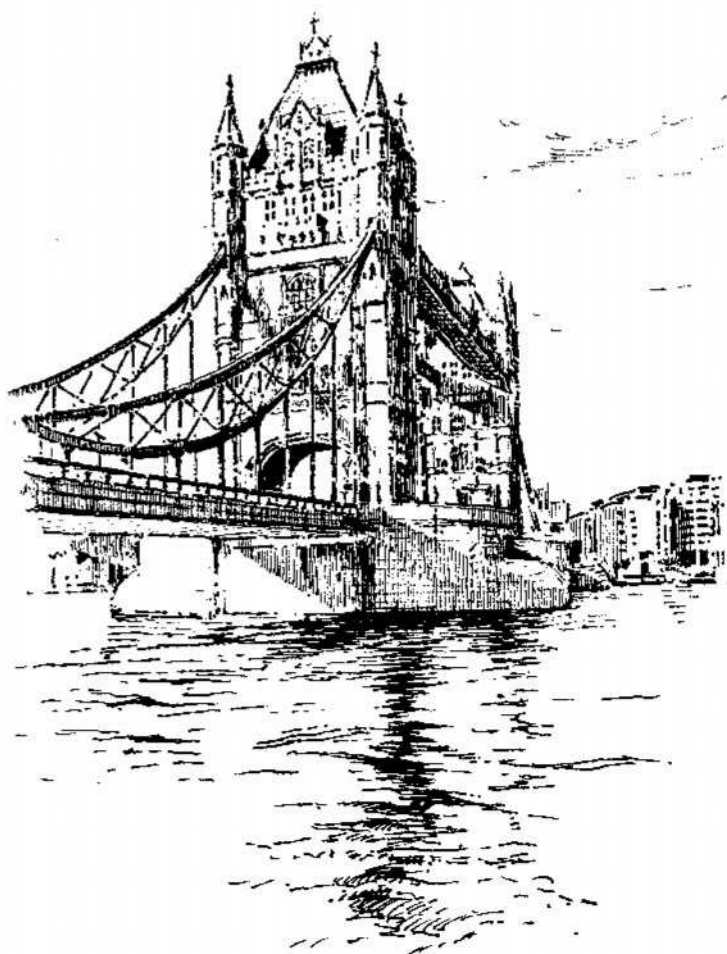
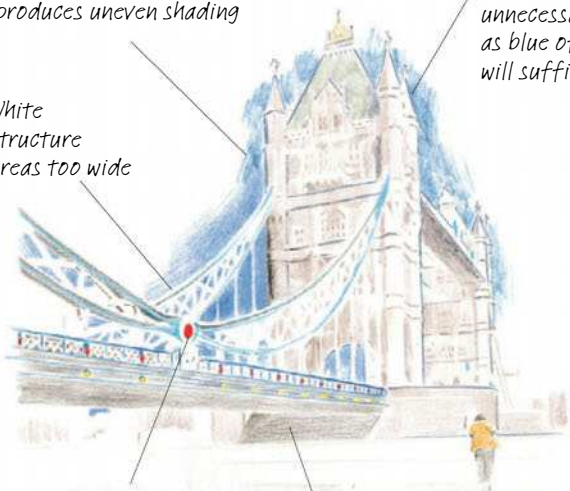
Careless application of pencil direction and pressure produces uneven shading

Dark outline unnecessary, as blue of sky will suffice

White structure areas too wide

Perspective for angle of red shape not observed correctly

More intensity of tone required for shadow areas



Solutions

In this drawing a change to 'studio' pencils, with their slim colour strips, has enabled a delicacy of detail to emerge as a result of careful handling and interpretation.

Some areas of white paper remain to suggest clouds

Work blue of sky either side of white poles

Place areas of blue sky within and around image

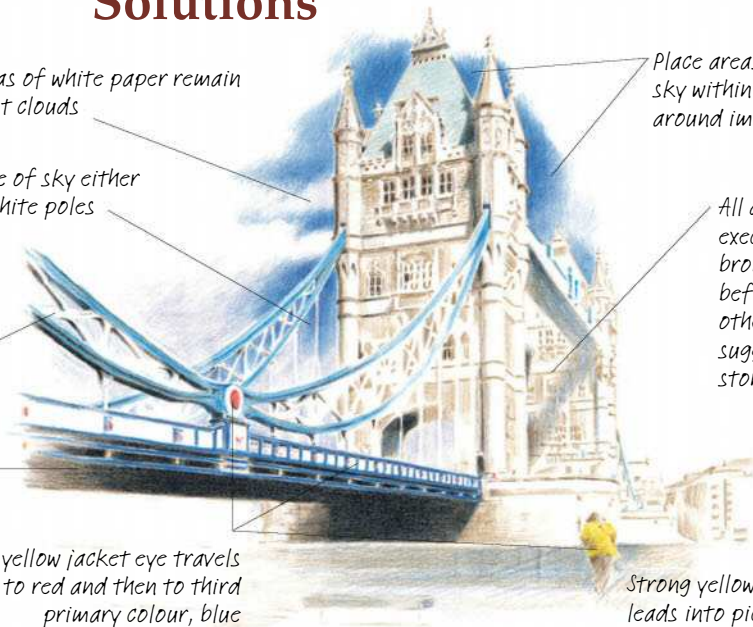
All drawing executed in bronze pencil before adding other hues to suggest stonework

Enhance shadow sides of white images with indigo over sepia

Bronze and sepia undercoat colours used for shadow area before indigo added to create intensity of tone

From yellow jacket eye travels to red and then to third primary colour, blue

Strong yellow of jacket leads into picture



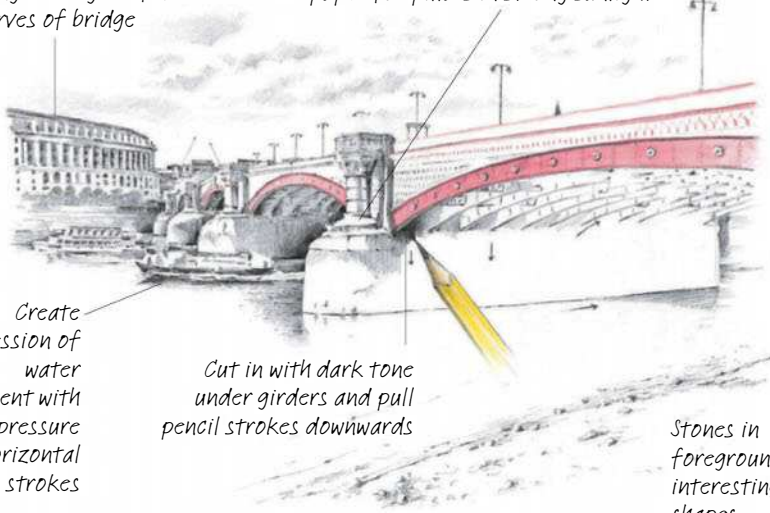
Curving lines of distant buildings echo graceful curves of bridge

Leave some areas of pure white paper for pillars in strong sunlight

Create impression of water movement with on/off pressure of horizontal strokes

Cut in with dark tone under girders and pull pencil strokes downwards

Stones in foreground have interesting shadow shapes

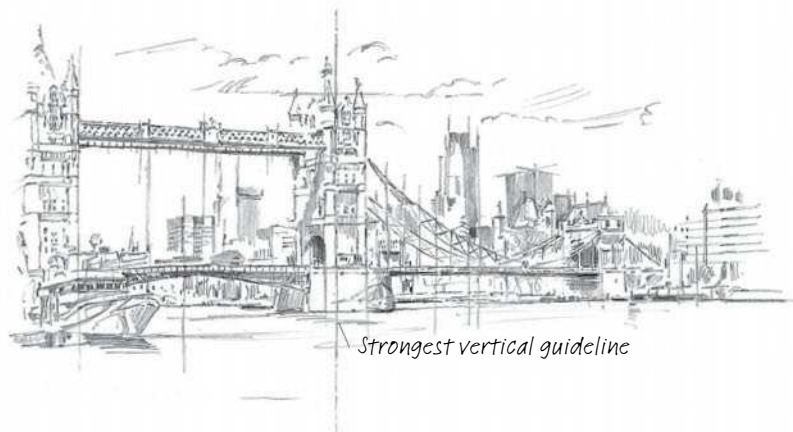


Low arched bridge

Before progressing into full colour, you may wish to try a combination of graphite drawing with limited colour. Here, I shaded a dark flesh watercolour pencil direct onto Bristol board, and then gently added water to blend the pigment and enable me to include more drawing over the (dried) colour.

Exploratory sketch

At whichever angle you choose to depict your image, it is helpful to view and sketch it from different angles.



Strongest vertical guideline

Iron Bridges: Typical Problems

Whether in a high arched bridge spanning a narrow waterway or a series of arches supported upon stone pillars crossing a wider expanse of water, the patterns created by positive and negative shapes can sometimes cause problems for novice artists. The numerous shapes, curves, contours and contrasts incorporated within the structure provide a maze that can mystify

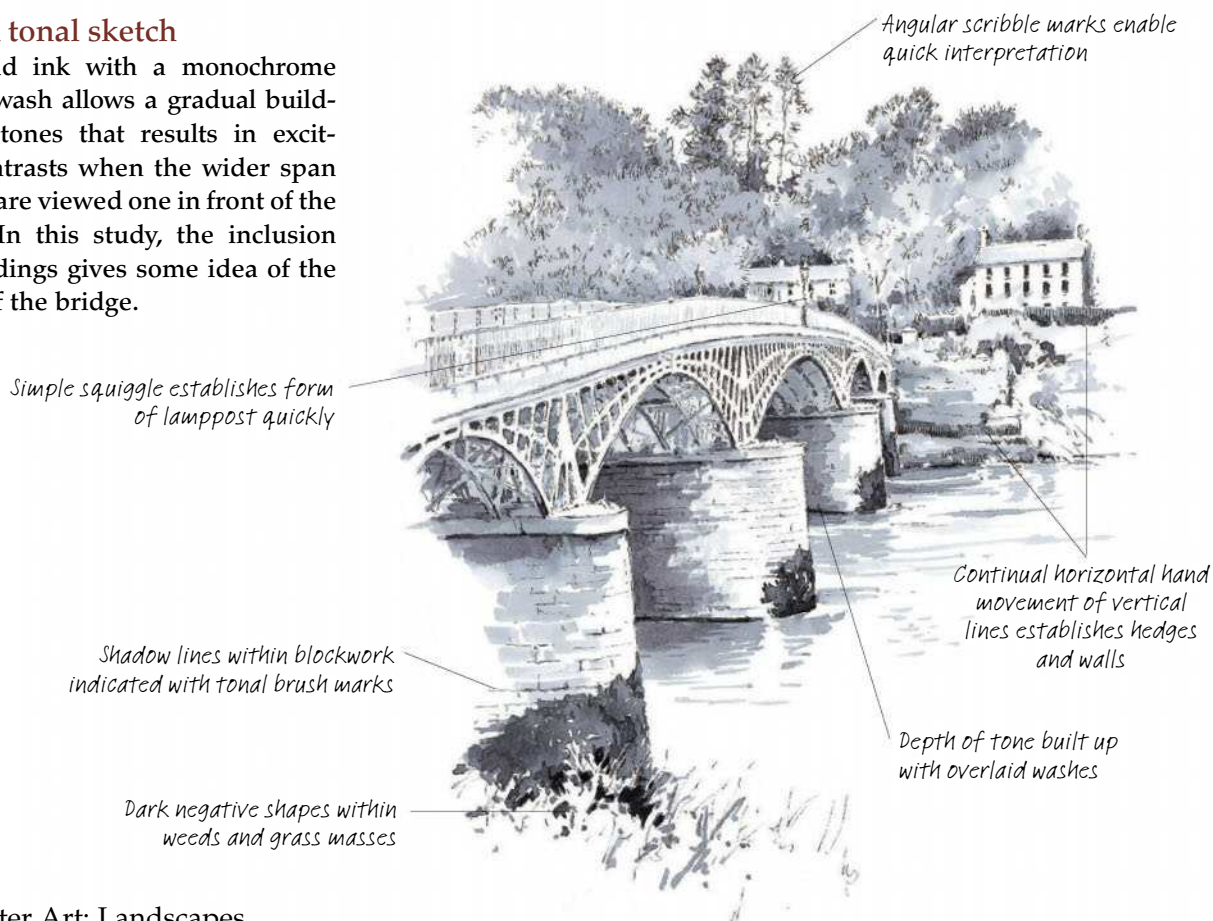
and confuse, but by concentrating on negative shapes and shadow shapes, as well as the more obvious positives, many problems can be solved.

Open ironwork structures are an excellent example of pattern, where consideration of the shapes between the ironwork, and their relationship with each other, will solve perspective problems.



Quick tonal sketch

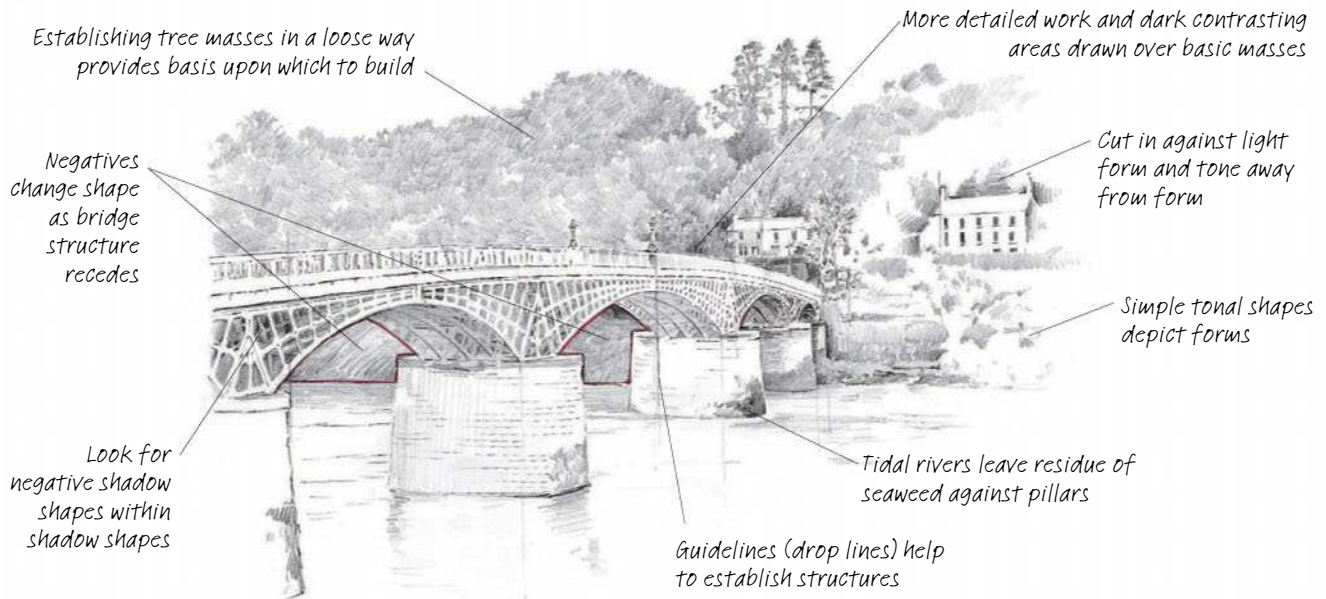
Pen and ink with a monochrome tinted wash allows a gradual build-up of tones that results in exciting contrasts when the wider span pillars are viewed one in front of the other. In this study, the inclusion of buildings gives some idea of the scale of the bridge.



Solutions

Although the bridge may be a complex structure, a pencil sketch can simplify it. The tree-clad hills rising up behind the buildings are depicted in simply applied directional tonal blocks, and the bridge can be positioned

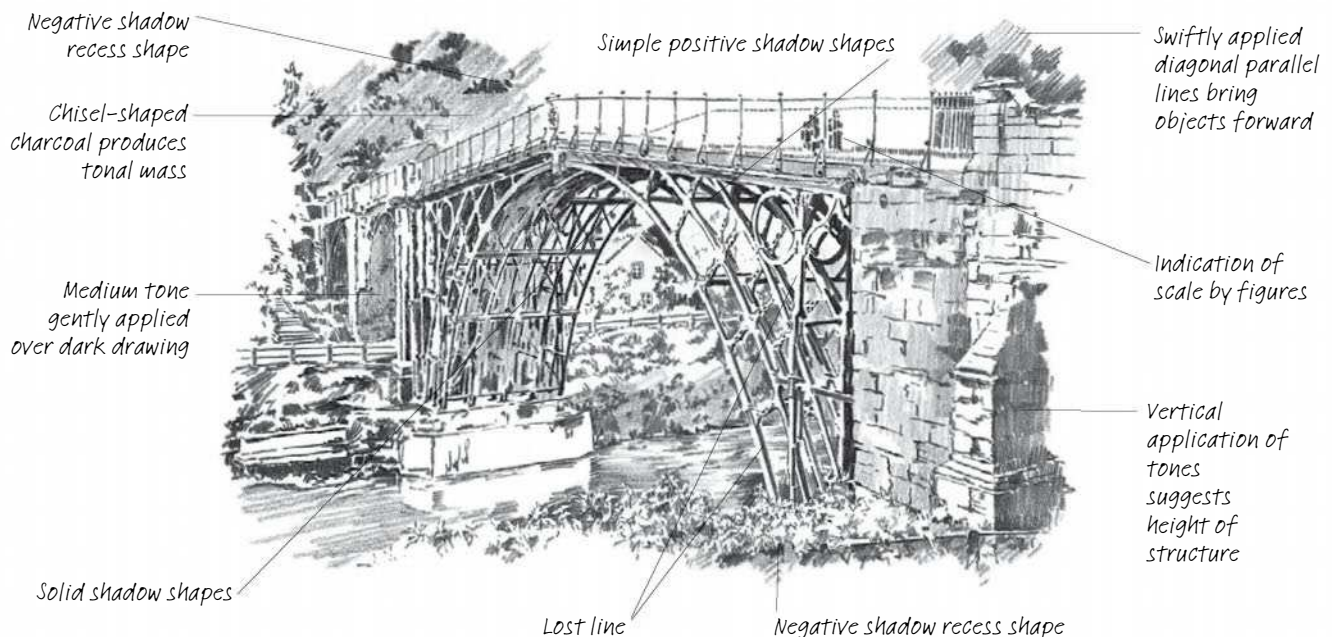
accurately in relation to this backdrop using lightly drawn guidelines and observing the negative shapes. Bristol board is an ideal surface for this technique, as it is possible to add detail over the initial tonal blocks.



Noticing the negatives

This drawing of a short-span iron bridge demonstrates the use of charcoal to create strong shadow shapes (the positive iron structure) and, by toning in the dark negatives, how the light positive shapes may be brought forward. I used soft charcoal pencil to

enhance the darks to their full potential. Charcoal is also ideal when creating subtle areas of light and medium tones, such as over stonework in shadow, encouraging light shapes to stand forward on both sides of the bridge.



Demonstration: Windmill

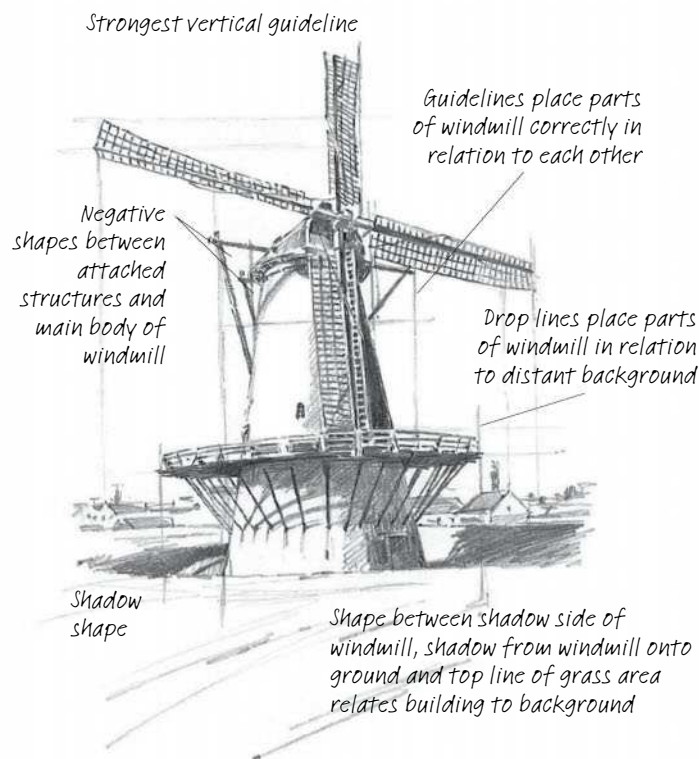
Having analysed the structure of iron bridges, where the sky is visible through girders, it is interesting to compare a similar effect using the image of a windmill. The medium chosen for this demonstration is gouache, which enables the use of white paint on the sails in front of the sky and the main body of the building.

Working sketch

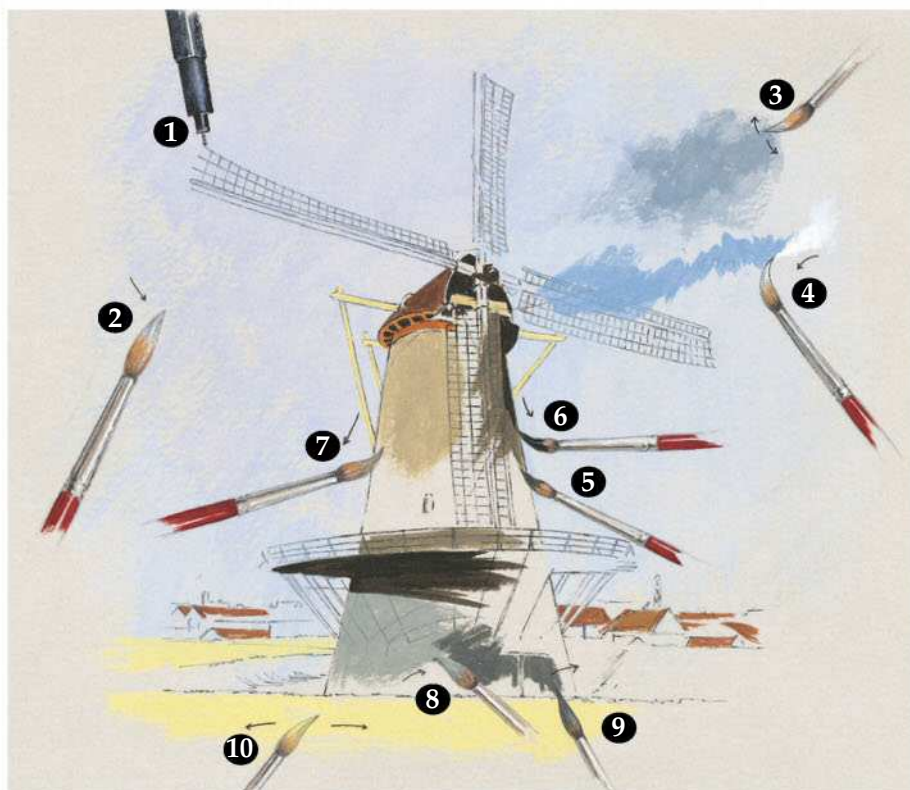
The initial sketch needs to be carefully executed using guidelines (drop lines) and horizontal lines that help to position other buildings in relation to the windmill. Strong shadows enhance the composition, and the shadow shapes made upon the ground help to contain the focal point lead-in, up to the top of the structure.

First stages

The image was then traced on to tinted Somerset Velvet paper in pencil. There are ten main stages of development to get the image established, which have been numbered in the order I worked, showing the initial pen drawing prior to all the areas of brushwork.



- 1 Use 0.1 Profipen to draw over pencilled image and erase pencil marks
- 2 Paint lightly with diluted pigment over sky area, allowing ink drawing to show through
- 3 Indicate shadow areas of clouds with directional strokes
- 4 Paint light edges of clouds up to greys and blues to describe forms
- 5 Paint shadow undercoat on side of building
- 6 Increase depth of shadow here and in other shadow areas
- 7 Cover side in direct sunlight with lighter hue
- 8 Paint lower part of structure with first light coat
- 9 Introduce dark side at base
- 10 Place first light colour over ground area



Final stages

Once the initial stages are complete, layers of gouache

can be built up, one upon the other, and texture introduced where necessary using the drybrush technique.



- 1 Note intricacies of busy area at top of structure
- 2 Use very fine brush for delicate lines
- 3 Avoid making warm hues of roofs too strong, to keep them in distance
- 4 Directional strokes indicate long grasses

- 5 Contrast very light areas against strongest darks
- 6 Include important shadows that enhance form
- 7 Pull almost dry paint across surface to create texture
- 8 Cloud formations become elongated as they recede into distance

Test your colour mixes on an offcut from your paper while you are working.



Country, Urban and City Landscapes

Drawing exercises

These tonal and linear pencil exercises demonstrate two extremes of use, and can be used alone or combined within a drawing. In this theme I refer to a method that tones up to, and away from, light edges, as well

as the use of tonal blocks on either side of a light strip. Wandering lines help to describe form when creating loose sketches.

Tonal block with 6B pencil



Up to and away strokes



6B pencil



3B pencil



Wandering line and follow form strokes



Combination of directions without lifting pencil from paper

Wandering line

Overlaid texture strokes

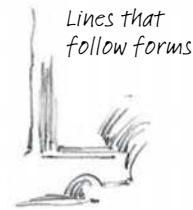
First tonal block laid with repeated downward strokes



Overlaid, firm pressure (close zigzag) stroke

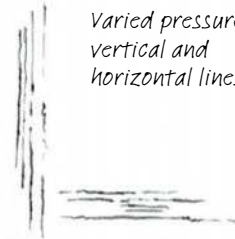


Close zigzag stroke



Lines that follow forms

Varied pressure vertical and horizontal lines



CHOOSING STROKES

You need to carefully consider strokes, their direction and application, for each subject you depict until their use becomes a natural habit. The more you can practise and experiment with angles, pressures, contours etc, the easier they become.

Vertical varied pressure



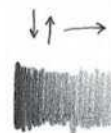
Normal writing position

Fanning out

With elbow closing in on body



Vertical outward gradation



Angle of hand achieved by keeping your elbow out and away from body

Cut in and tone away



Pencil held above image with elbow on same line as pencil tip

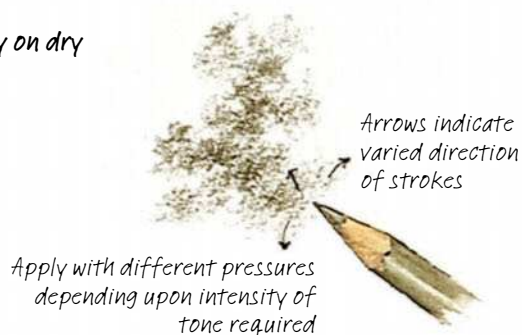


Tip of pencil in cut-in position – elbow at side for push up, out and away strokes

Watercolour pencils

This versatile medium can be used both dry and wet to create interesting textures.

Dry on dry



Wet into dry



Dry on dry

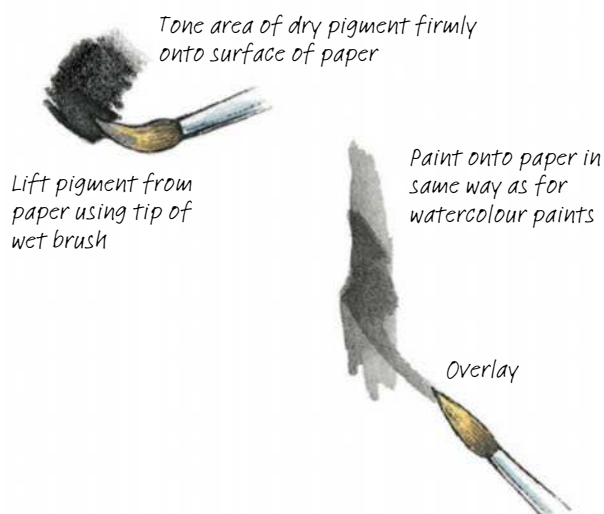


Wet and dry combination

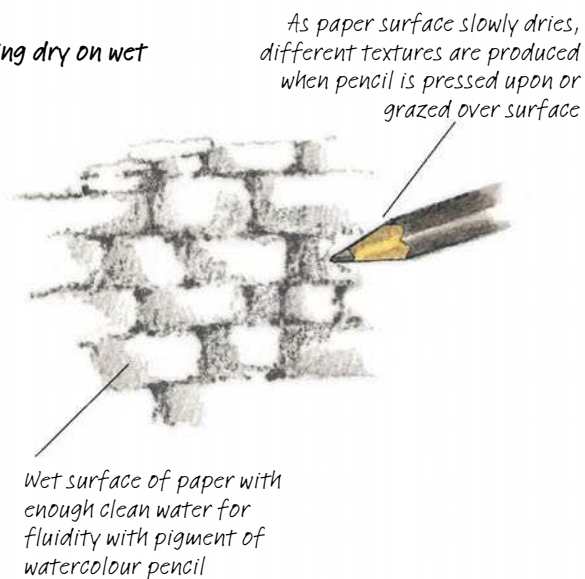


The palette method

This is an ideal method for tinting pen-and-ink work where pale-tinted washes are required.



Drawing dry on wet

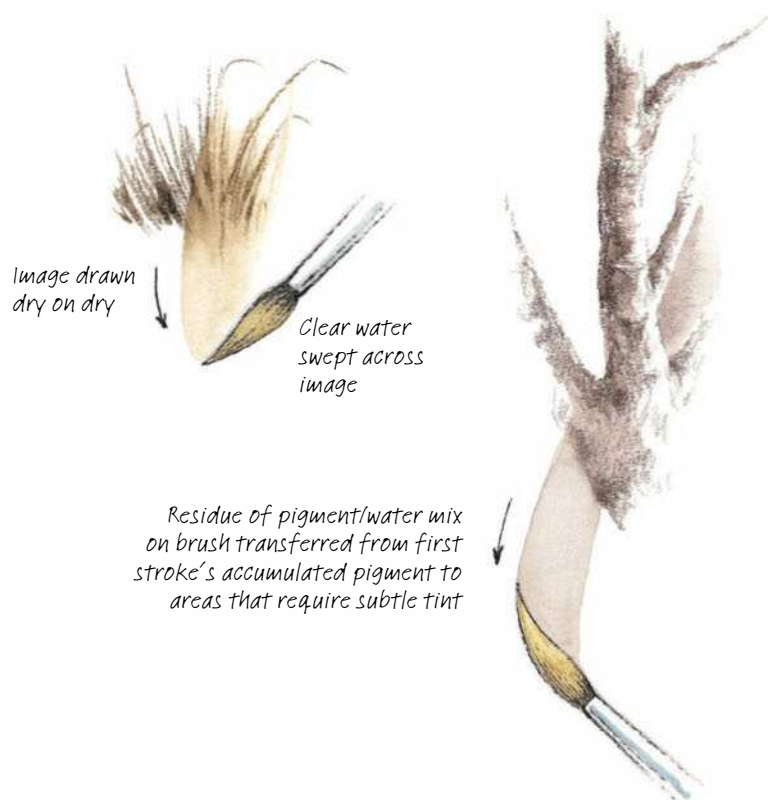


Watercolour pencil exercises

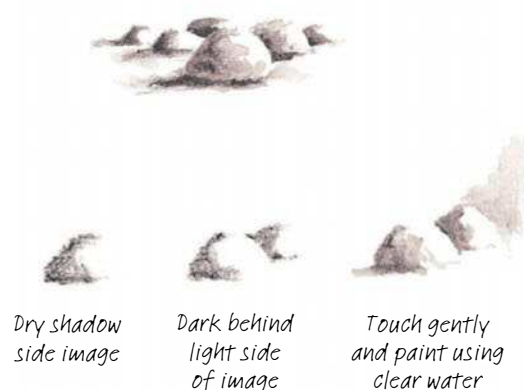
Watercolour pencil colour strips can be sharpened into a palette and mixed with water to create different hues. You can work in monochrome by applying the tip of a brush dipped in clean water to the colour strip of the pencil. Lift the pigment with the wet brush and paint it on the paper. Dry-on-dry images can be enhanced by adding water in sweeping strokes, blending the pigment to produce tinted washes over a softened image.

Clear water strokes

First draw the image dry on dry, then sweep clean water swiftly and lightly across your drawing. Experiment with the amount of water required so as not to erase the image by applying too much, or to smudge it by applying too little. Also practise leaving areas of white paper untouched where you wish to feature contrasting highlights.

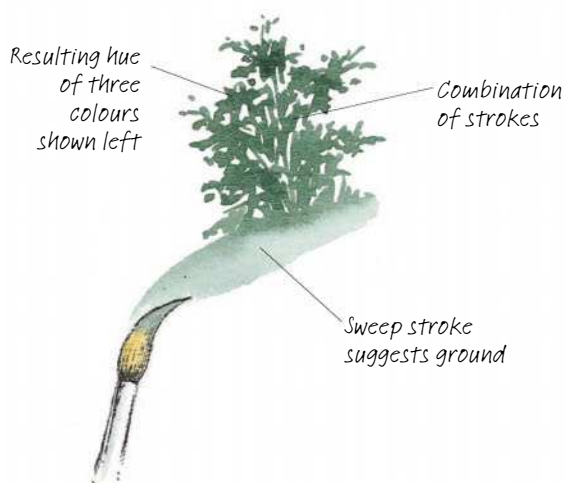
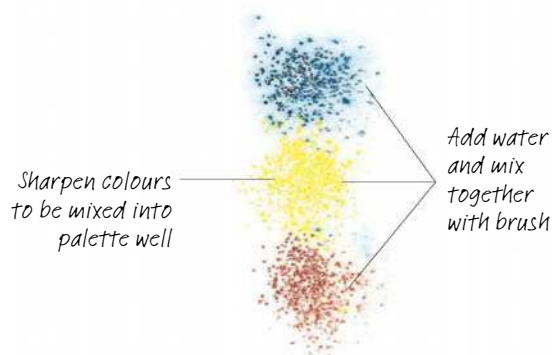


Creating contrasts



Sharpen and mix

If the exact hue you require is not in your range of pencils, there are various ways of mixing colours.



Touch tip and paint

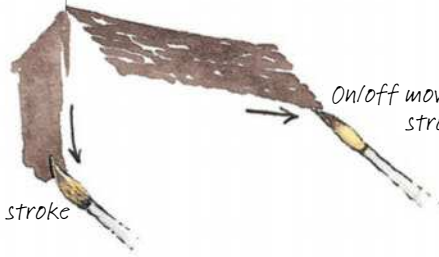
Touch tip of watercolour pencil with brush dipped in clean water



Describe edge

Pull-down stroke

Fine line across stroke intensified and thickened to create shadow line stroke



Transfer the resulting pigment to paper and create images using a variety of strokes

On/off movement of sideways stroke creates texture



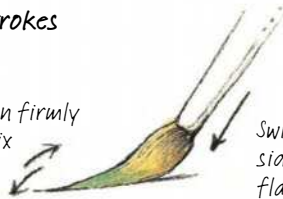
Cut in and paint away strokes

Varied width strokes

Different widths of stroke can be achieved easily if you shape your brush prior to making a stroke. Press a medium-size brush (No. 8 or 9) into a pigment mix in the palette well, flattening the hairs to form a chisel shape, then use the narrow side you have created to produce very fine lines.

To create thin strokes

Press brush down firmly into pigment mix



Swirl gently from side to side to flatten hairs and form chisel shape

Normal (round shape) sweep-down stroke



Use narrow edge to draw thin lines

Versatility of medium-size brush

Pull down using the thin edge established by creating chisel side



Sweep across using full rounded shape



Combine strokes



Historic Building: Typical Problems

Half-timbered buildings tend to be associated with the countryside, but they may also be found within urban landscapes and historic towns. Sometimes the pattern of the woodwork may be superficial and only a façade, but whether they are an integral part of the structure or for cosmetic purposes only, the attractive patterns

make interesting subjects for drawings and paintings.

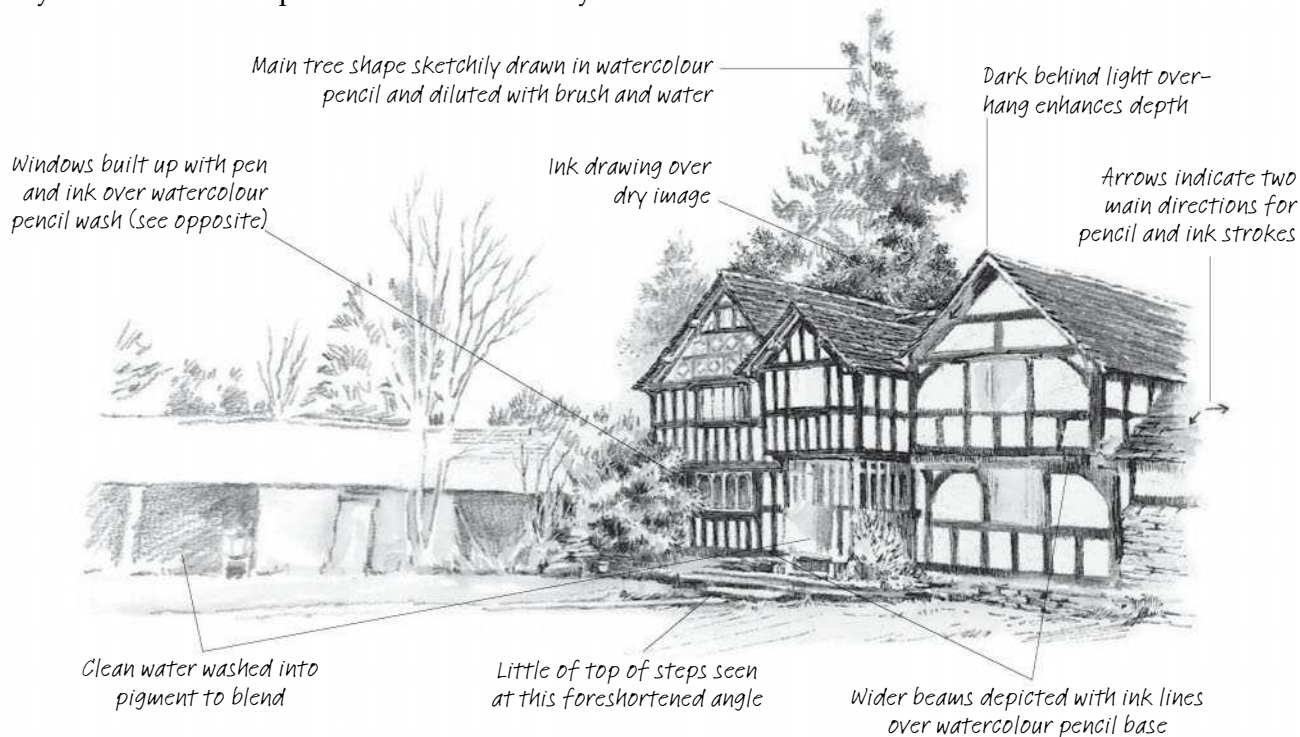
Watercolour pencils are ideal for depicting this subject, as they can be used alone – wet or dry – or with another medium. They enable underdrawing and overpainting to work well together without the use of a second medium, such as graphite pencil.



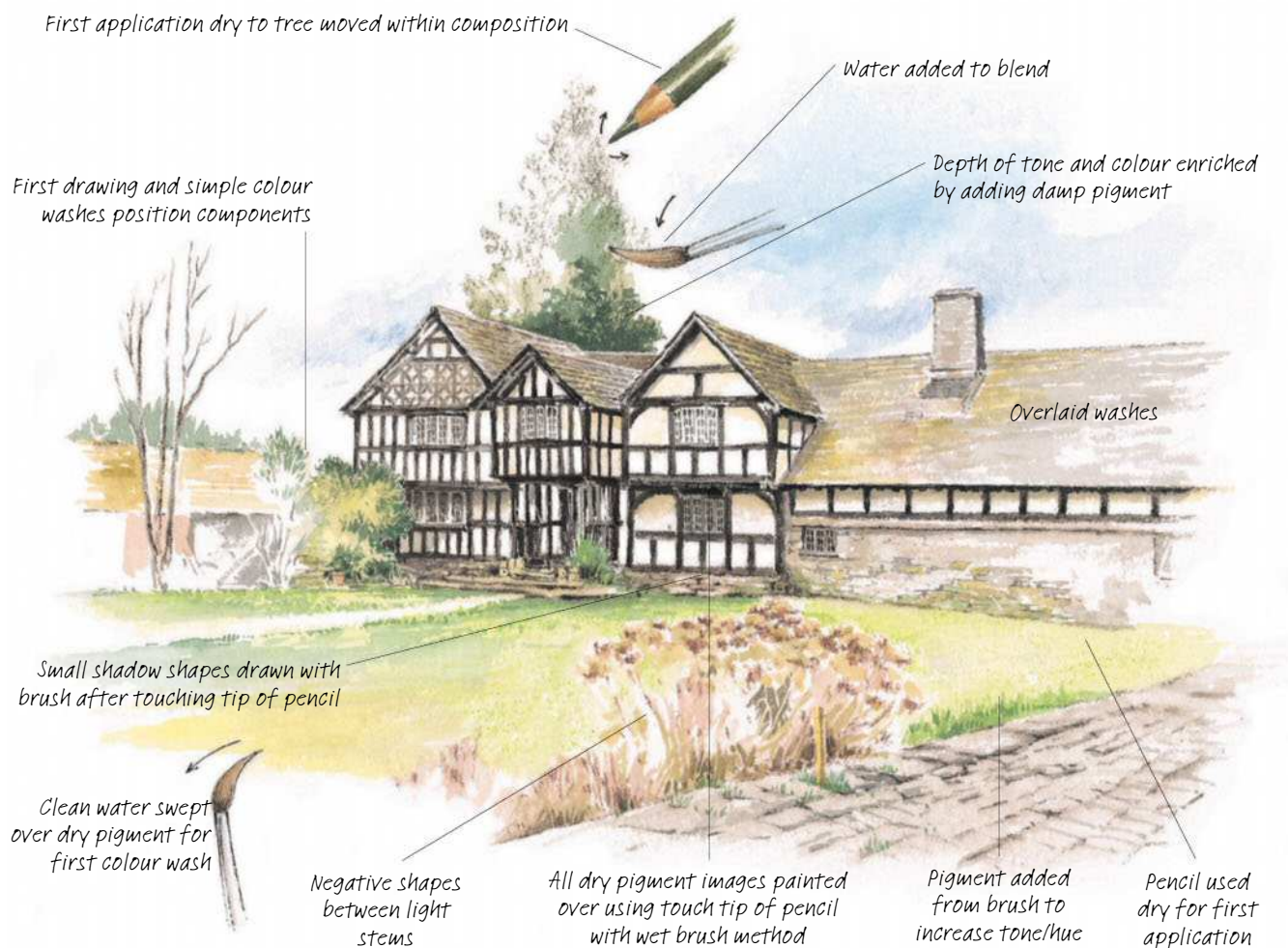
Mixed-media study

Making a monochrome study in mixed media – here, ivory black watercolour pencil and ink – enables you

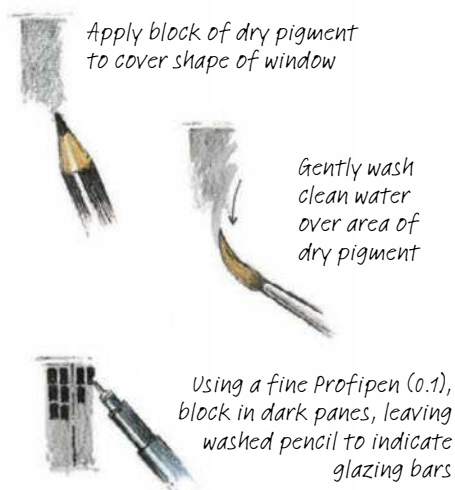
to pay attention to the drawing, which encourages close observation and helps with the correct placing of the dark timbers.



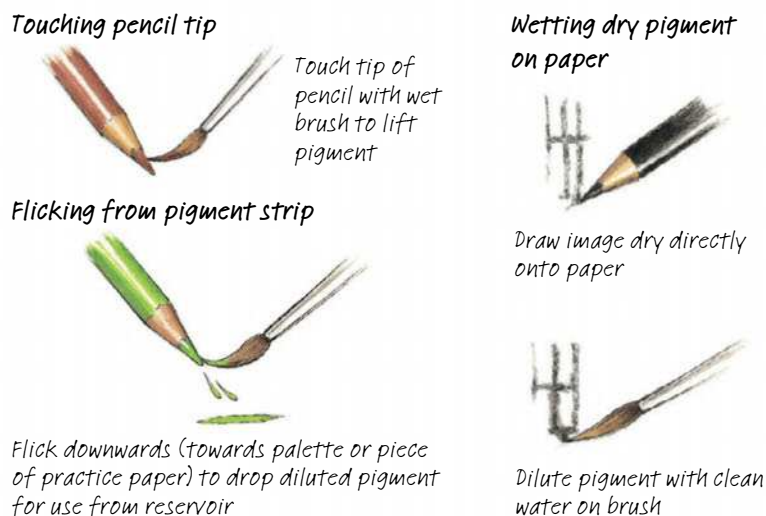
Solutions



Building window image



Wet and dry methods



Scale and Movement: Typical Problems

Viewing city buildings from a distance, without the movement suggested by the inclusion of people and traffic, can present an uninteresting, static landscape. If you are looking to create a feeling of movement, this can be achieved by choosing an angle that relates to disturbed water or a busy sky. When depicting the scale of tower blocks, it is useful to consider how this may be indicated, both at a distance and within the complex itself. You may also suggest a feeling of movement if you position your observation point in relation to water.

Watercolour study

Moving the observer's eye into your composition is important, and this sketch indicates how this can be achieved by the use of strongly angled forms – pathways and walls, etc. The same group of buildings as above right, viewed from a slightly different position, here introduces strong perspective angles that guide the eye into the picture.

No thought given to negative shape between buildings

Problems with perspective

Line dividing land and water should be horizontal

Structure incorrectly represented

Structures do not relate convincingly

Area of sky between buildings is important negative shape

Buildings are first positioned in pale tones/hues

Working structures add interest to skyline and bring colour into another area through reflections

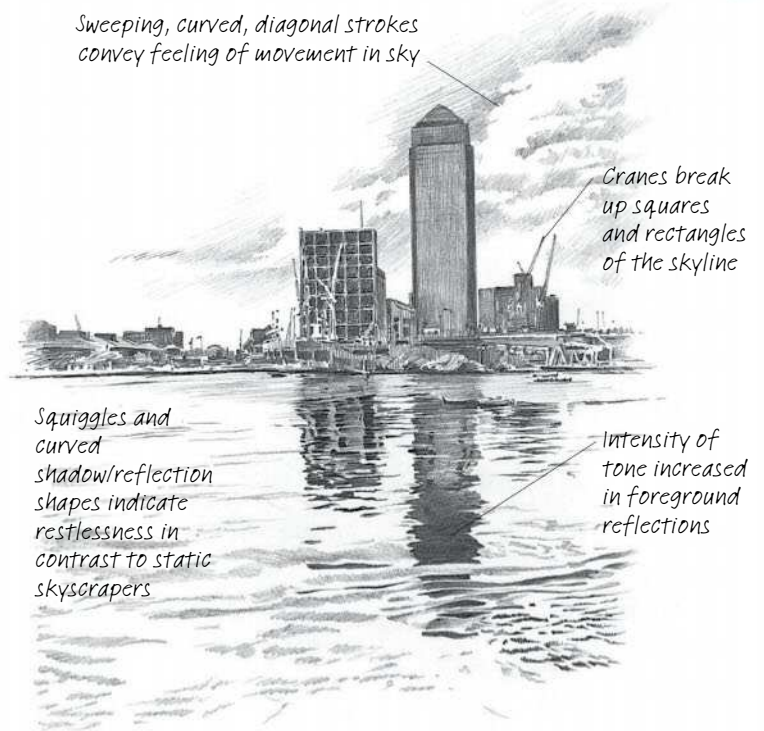
Strength of tone/colour built with overlaid washes

Solutions

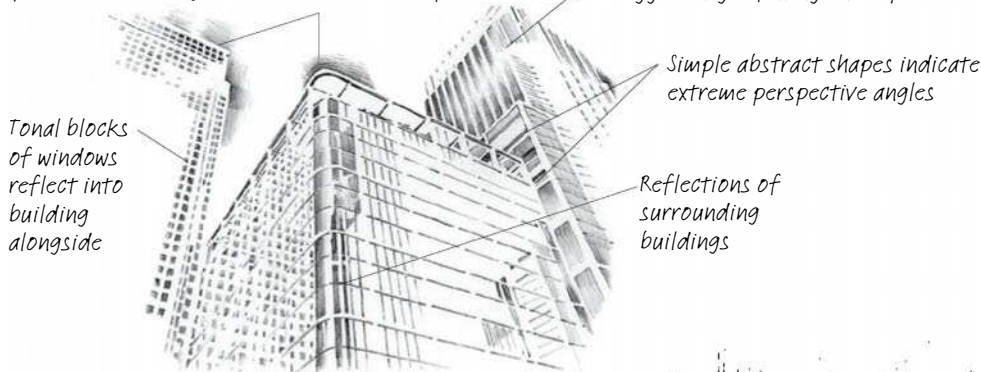
We not only see movement in water but also in cloud formations in the sky. Either or both can help soften the image of tall, solid tower-block structures, creating movement within the picture.

Getting to know your subject

Wherever possible, familiarize yourself with buildings from different aspects, at a distance and close up. Standing within a complex of this nature, you move your eyes from the base of the structures up towards the sky. Small detailed pencil studies depicting patterns in glass-fronted buildings will help you understand how to select and simplify from the complexity of shapes you are confronted with. What you choose to leave out of your interpretation is just as important as what you choose to include.



To enhance light forms against darker sky, apply pencil to outer edge of form and tone away

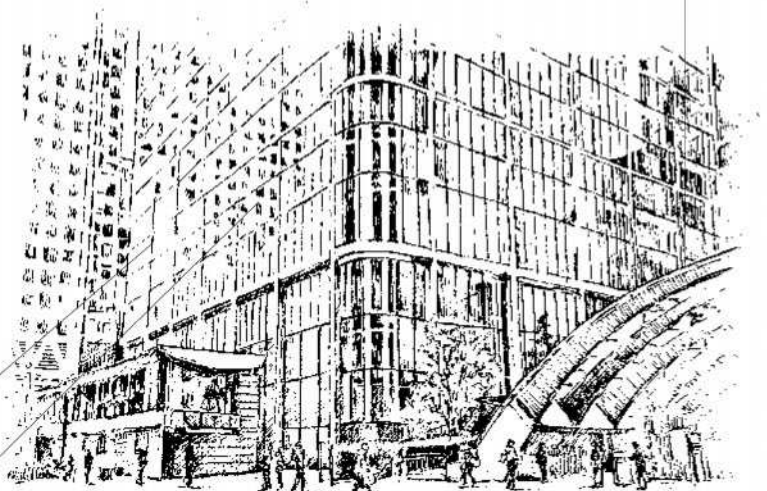


The balance of busy areas

To comprehend the scale of buildings, freely interpreted sketches made while standing at the base of the structures enable you to introduce other relevant structures and the activity of figures. Both movement and scale should play a large part in your interpretation.

Glazing bars of main building drawn first

Reflection between bars (from separate buildings to the side) shows different perspective angle



Townscapes: Typical Problems

An effective way to create an impression of town or city streets is to observe and depict the view from a window that is above people, cars and buildings. As there is so much movement to cope with, it is advisable to take a photograph of the scene then use it as a reference to look for simple shapes, which should be your starting point.

If you wish to achieve a pure watercolour, you can still draw lightly on your watercolour paper and use the faint pencil lines as a guide, erasing as many as possible after your first pale watercolour washes have dried. Before doing this, however, it is wise to get to know your subject by sketching the positions of buildings and other urban features with the use of vertical and horizontal guidelines.

Buildings on each side of road treated as separate entities and do not relate to each other

Skyline too level

Figures too large in relation to buildings



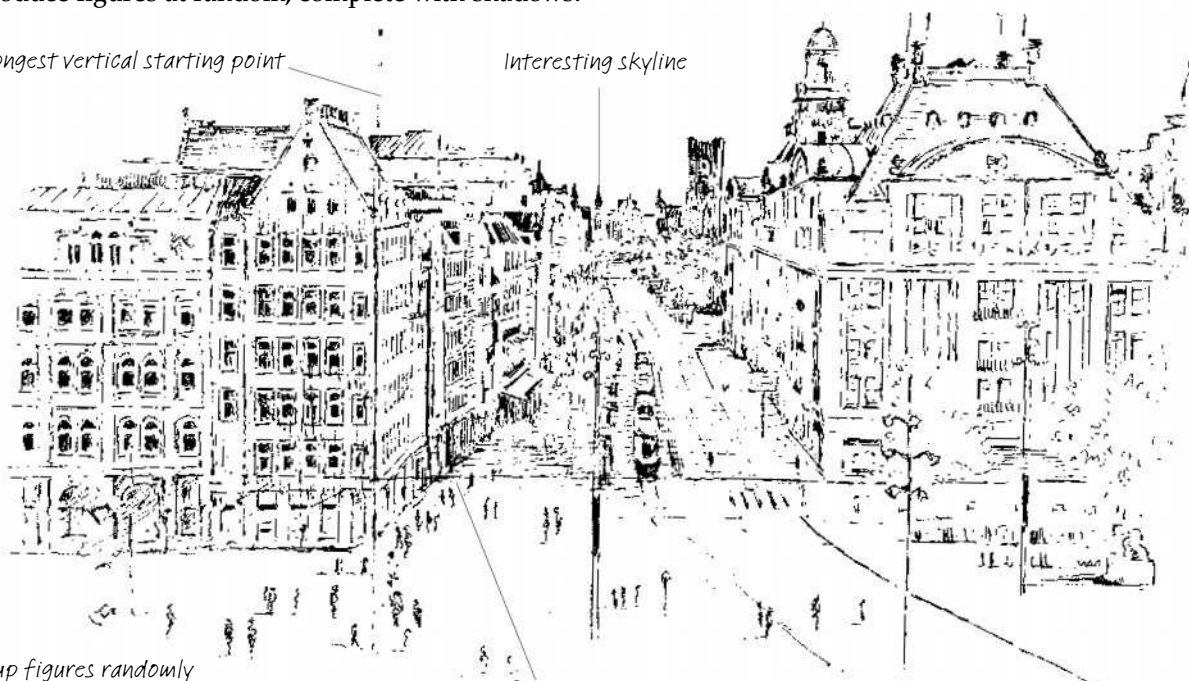
Lampposts painted dark of necessity, but no white paper left to indicate highlighted side

Quick pen and ink sketch

Using a photograph as your guide, familiarize yourself with the juxtapositions of all of the components and introduce figures at random, complete with shadows.

Strongest vertical starting point

Interesting skyline



Group figures randomly for natural effect

Important horizontal guideline to relate buildings on both sides

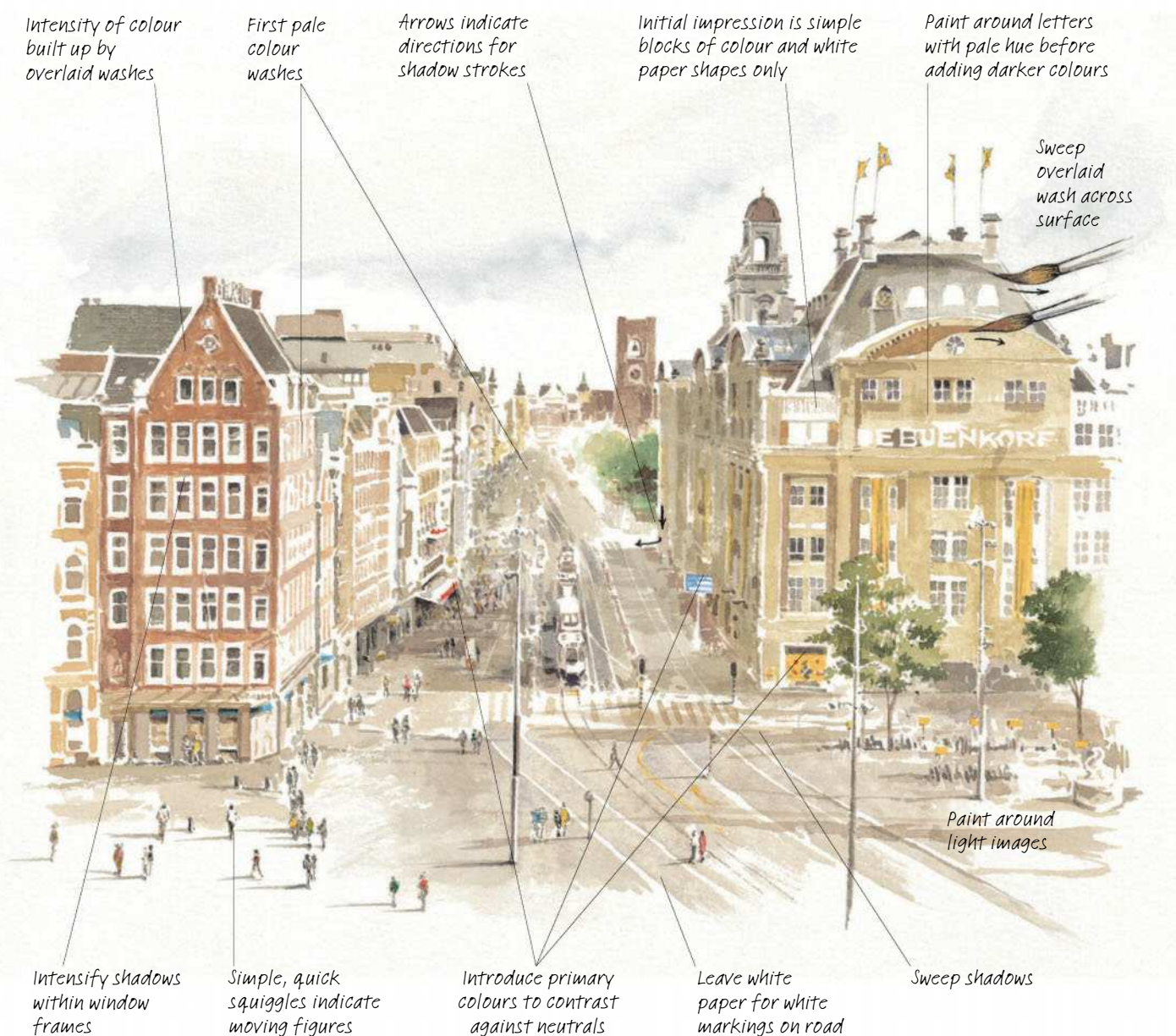
Solutions

In order to simplify, look for shapes – tonal blocks and colour blocks. In this illustration, I have painted over and within the first simple shapes directionally, to create an impression. You can see the various stages involved in building a composition that involves vast, busy areas, incorporating large, static buildings and smaller moving objects.

Because you are building a painting with overlaid washes – wet over dry – it is important to start with a drawing with which you are pleased, otherwise the

tone/colour shapes you will be painting will not look convincing when the picture is complete. Remember to allow all the washes to dry completely before erasing any pencil marks.

Practise using more water with your pigment than you think you will need, as this will help you paint around the areas that are to remain white/light without creating watermarks. Should you go over one of these areas, you can correct the mistake by quickly blotting off, allowing the paper to dry and re-applying paint.



Demonstration: Old Buildings

Many urban landscapes contain pockets of character buildings – tree-lined streets with wide cobbled or slabbed pathways and spreads of grass, offer us tranquillity and a glimpse of the past that is very enticing. A variety of façades that may include hanging tiles, weatherboarding, plain rendered walls or rendering within timbers, often painted in strong pastel hues, provides the artist with tantalizing textures to depict. In the autumn, when leaves change to bright coppers and yellows before falling to add their gems of colour to wet pathways, the combination of ink and wash as a medium to enhance this clarity of tone and colour, seems an ideal choice.

Mixing the mediums of ink and wash can be approached in various ways. Three options are: placing tinted washes over an ink drawing, drawing over a wash painting, and working the two together right from the beginning as a planned progression. The first two – where ink drawing and first colour washes are minimal, to block in areas and establish the composition, before more pen-work and colour washes alternate in order to enhance tone and colour – are shown on this page, and the third method is described in the final demonstration opposite.

Wash over ink

I worked on Saunders Waterford 180gsm (90lb) Rough paper for the small study at right, using a 0.1 Profipen.

As the pen grazes the surface a soft-textured effect is created, over which fluid washes may be placed. My pressure is always light upon the paper for this technique, and the darks are enriched by overworking in the same area rather than by applying firmer pressure.

As images recede, apply less pressure on the pen for minimum contact and to achieve faint impression

Vertical strokes used to enhance shadow areas

Vertical application of ink to suggest textured surfaces



First washes painted loosely

First rough indication of positions of glazing bars, clarified later by ink drawing



Ink over wash

In the study at left, washes have been painted freely over images that were lightly placed in pencil. As much of the pencil as possible is removed after the paint is dry before a fine pen is used to draw in the details and textures, as well as to enrich the dark tonal contrasts.

Bright yellow of individual leaves in different areas unifies painting

Pencil sketch (right)

The composition was planned in pencil, with the use of guidelines to establish the correct relationships between the different types of building.

Ink and wash combination (below)

I chose another angle, showing the same row of buildings, in order to look closer at the textures on timbers. The surface of Rough paper works with the pen to create textures instantly. Because there was a different variety of tree in this area that possessed no leaves, I omitted its form and faded the edges of the painted inked images, rather than restricting the composition to a definite format.



Main images lightly drawn in ink over faint pencil guide before erasing pencil

Avoid too much detail when depicting distant forms

Enhance areas of dark against light for full contrast

First pale colour washes swiftly placed to block in areas

Cut in to white/light forms and sweep strokes away to cover paper smoothly

Reinforce drawing over first colour washes



Note treatment of reflections, whether against gloss paint or water on surface

Pay attention to detail and accuracy when depicting structure and texture

Trees and Woodland

Drawing exercises

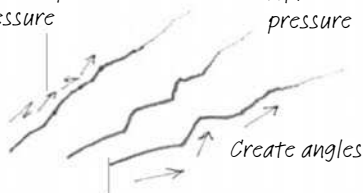
The strokes here can be applied smoothly or erratically, to create interest of line. Practise twisting the pencil between your fingers as you push the pencil along, initially with firm pressure, before reducing your hand

pressure prior to lifting the pencil from the paper. This type of stroke encourages a loose approach for more natural images. Try to create angles when practising these lines.

*Tonal block
5B pencil*

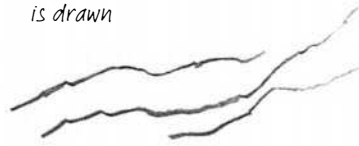


*Erratic upward
pressure*



*Lift
pressure*

*Keep pressure of pencil on
paper and twist it as the stroke
is drawn*



*Sharpen pencil to create
very fine lines*



*Single upward
push stroke*



Basic cross



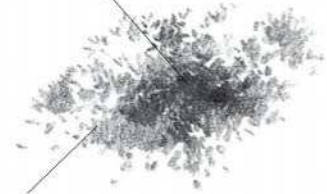
*Central area of massed crosses, disguised to
lose initial image*



*Massed upward push
strokes applied with
firm pressure*



*Mass of crosses
created by firm
pressure on paper*



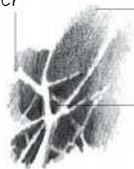
*Other tones and pressures with single
upward push strokes around edges*

CHOOSING SHAPES

Positive and negative shapes are important considerations for any subject, and their relationships with each other can help you create interesting compositions. Some shapes may be more geometric and possess crisp edges, whereas others may be uneven, lack definition and be broken. The juxtaposition of all these should provide interest and contrasts.

Try to observe your surroundings with an artist's eye in the form of positive and negative shapes – then practise drawing and painting them.

*Leave areas of
white paper*



Blend into paper

*Contrast smaller
shapes with
larger ones*



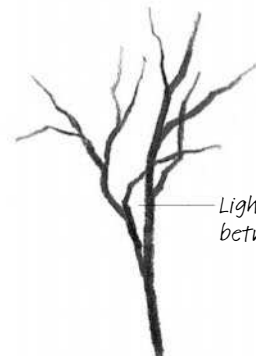
*Combine first
two exercises in
dark silhouette*

Create uneven tonal mass



*Relate smaller
masses*

Rich dark tone

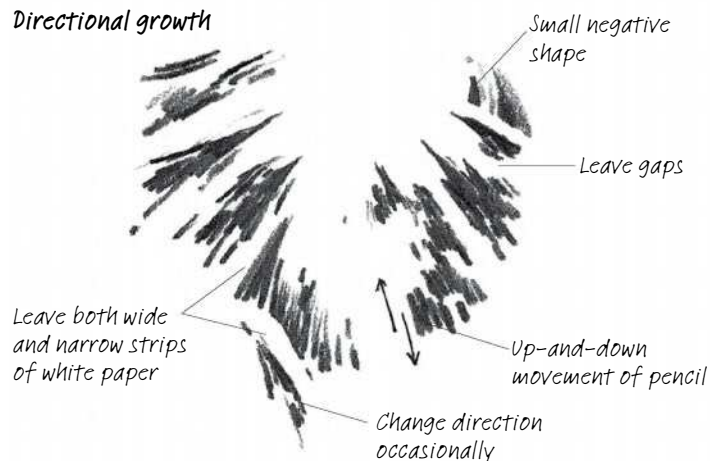


*Light shape
between*

Soft pencil drawing

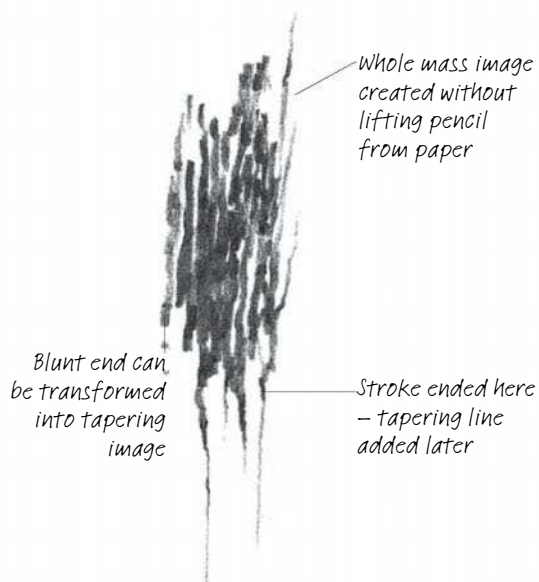
Although they may appear to be very varied, all these studies are exercises in downward directional strokes. In each, the continuous up-and-down application of tone creates interesting masses.

Directional growth



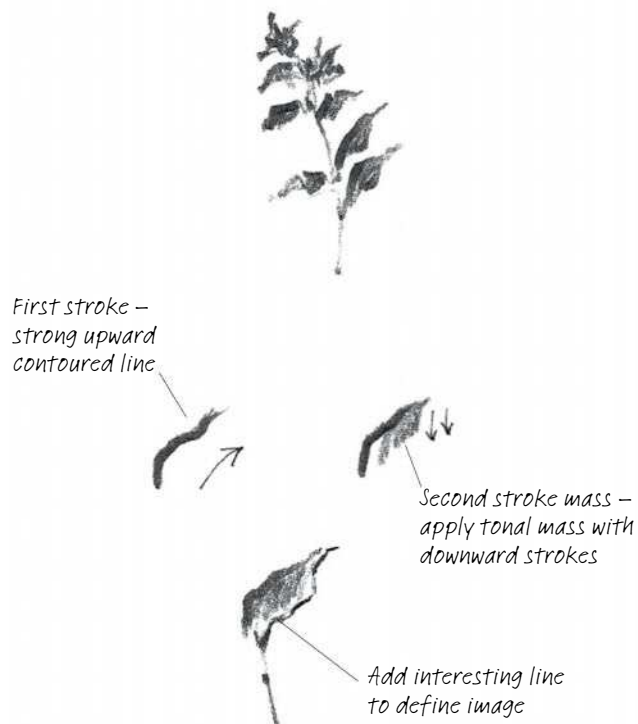
Textured mass

Vertically applied, varied-pressure strokes may result in your pencils having blunt ends when the strokes are executed with continuous movements to form a textured mass (below right).



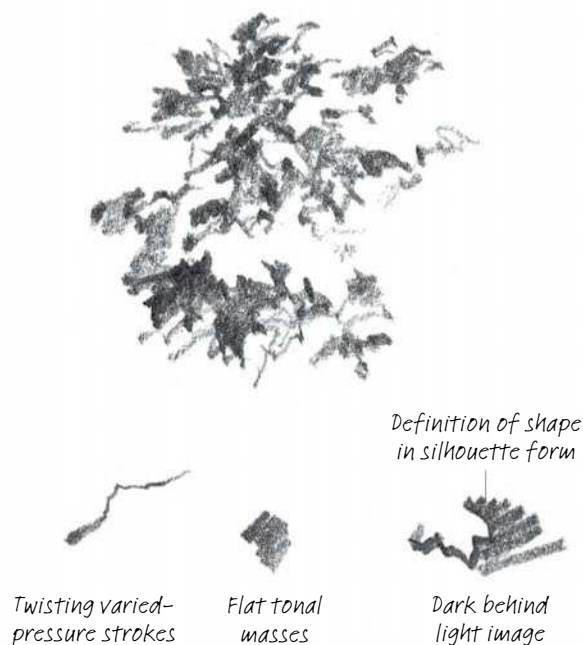
Recognizable image

A variety of strokes follows one after the other, with continuous application in order to create a recognizable image.



Recognizable mass

When depicting a mass area, you can travel from one shape to another without lifting pencil from paper by reducing the pressure to the extent that only fine wandering lines are visible before you reassert the pressure to make tonal shapes.



Coloured pencil exercises

The pencil exercises shown on the previous pages can also be effectively executed using coloured pencils. By gently increasing pressure in your stroke application for lines and masses, you will be able to enrich colours as well as tones.

It is by the depiction of contrasting areas that your work will most benefit. On these pages are some practice exercises to gain knowledge in the creation of contrasts by using white paper and light, bright colours against rich darks.

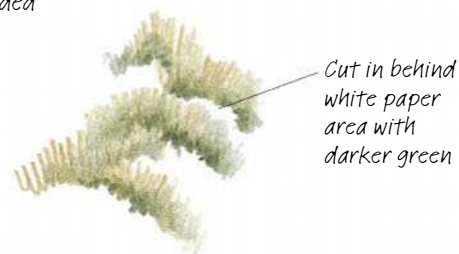
Cutting in

Olive green



Continuous up and down lines,
fan-shapes of different sizes

Cedar green added



Cut in behind
white paper
area with
darker green

Shadow recesses



Dark masses amid white

Cedar green



Variety of hues overlaid

Shadow lines

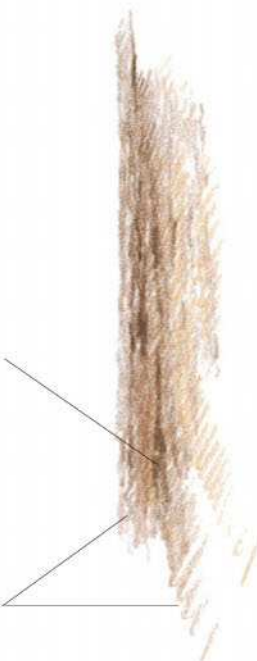
Vandyke brown



Lay textured area with varied pressure strokes

Enrich darks by
applying more
pressure to pencil

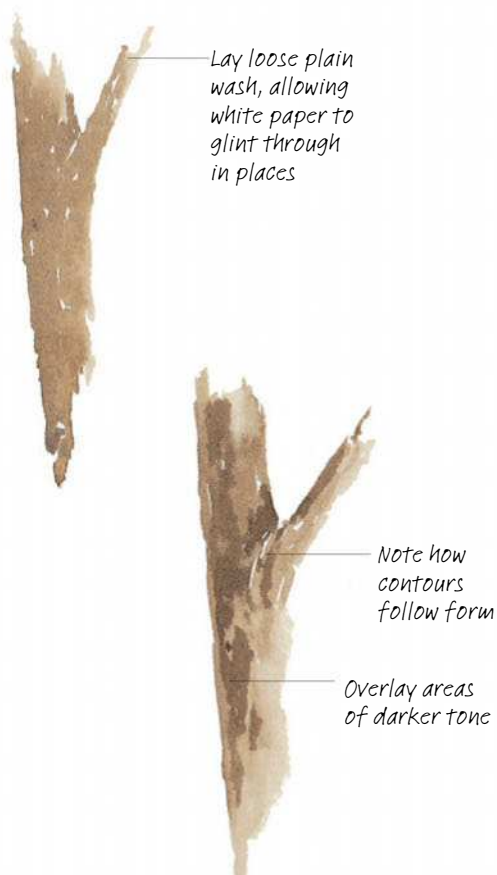
Overlay other hues



Watercolour exercises

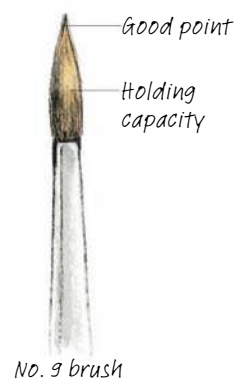
The movements for the strokes in these exercises are similar to those used with pencils. By using a medium-

sized brush – I used a No. 9 – their shapes will, however, appear different upon a watercolour paper surface.



From this...

...to this



Foliage mass

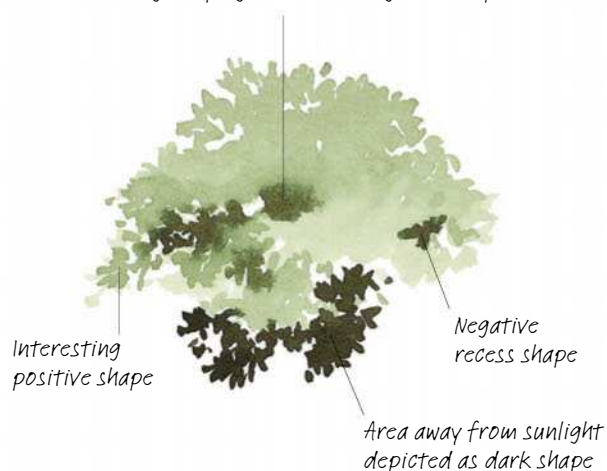


Push strokes upwards and outwards for interesting silhouette



Add clean water and pull pigment down to complete shape

Drop in dark pigment to blend with damp surface, remaining crisp against white negative shape



Single Trees: Typical Problems

With so many varieties of tree to choose from, whether viewed in gardens, parks, clinging to steep hillsides or in open countryside, their depiction can prove problematic. In addition to the basic structure, you need also to be aware of leaf mass shapes and direction of

growth to correctly represent the species. This can be achieved in a loose, free style or with a tighter, more botanical approach – whichever method you choose, a good starting point is to observe a few individual specimens in isolation.

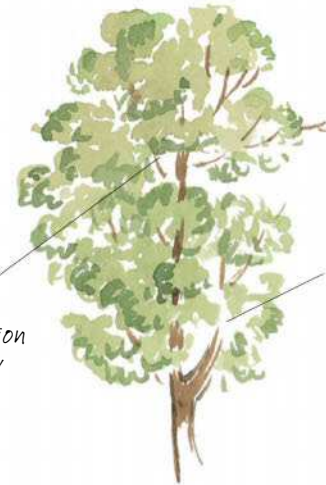
White paper left by accident rather than design, so has no value

Dark areas painted without regard for negative shapes



Curved linear brushstrokes restrict depiction of uneven leafy masses

Loss of continuity by omitting to join branch or suggest leafy mass in front



Small tree in garden

A slender garden specimen in its autumn splendour gives you an opportunity to consider colours other than green, as well as shapes (whether positive or negative) that can be abstracted and simplified.

Where many leaves of similar hue/tone merge they form larger positive shape

Some marks suggest individual leaf shapes

Dark negative shapes between light leaf masses comprise leaves in shadow



Solutions

In contrast to broadleaf varieties, we can observe more elongated negative shapes between the lighter masses in coniferous varieties.

Image of tree first painted as silhouette using pale, subtle, muted greens, then allowed to dry

Shadow shapes (negatives) placed with consideration for light foliage at the fore

Interesting and accurate small directional brushstrokes suggest tree species

Uneven silhouette shape carefully considered to achieve natural effect

Glazing

Dilute yellow mix gently passed over dry surface to glaze and introduce bright warmth

Silhouette pattern of tiny leaves against light sky

First pale tone/hue wash depicts entire tree

Negative shapes of completed tree before sky added

Sky painted between branches, twigs and leaves with delicate brushstrokes

Adding a sky

When depicting an individual tree, you can add the sky colour after the tree image has been completed and allowed to dry thoroughly. Mix a suitable blue using plenty of water and gently apply it with the tip of your brush to the areas between foliage masses and branches. Then work out to the perimeter and blend it into the paper, adding water as required.

Second overlaid wet-on-dry wash cuts in behind leaf mass shapes, retaining areas of first wash to suggest pale leaf masses

Negative (recess) shape enhances strong contrast of foliage mass in front

Light falling across main branch helps to define form

Variety of tones/hues, shadow shapes and negative shapes suggested by directional application of brushstrokes

Main branch in shadow provides strong contrast against light sky

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